

THE ^{1560/47}
ONE - PROPER SONSHIP

OF
The LORD JESUS CHRIST,

ILLUSTRATED AND ESTABLISHED

FROM

The HOLY SCRIPTURES:

IN OPPOSITION UNTO

The Doctrine of ARIANS and SOCINIANS:

In a Discourse from Rom. viii. 3.

—*God sending his own Son.*—

By THOMAS JACOMB, D. D.

HEB. xii. 4. —*By it he, being dead, yet speaketh.*

F A L K I R K:

PRINTED BY PATRICK MAIR,

FOR HUGH MITCHELL, THE PUBLISHER.

M DEC. XCI.

To the PUBLIC.

AS the abominations of Socinianism are making rapid progress in the present time, some well-disposed persons, who had read Dr. JACOMB's Discourses upon the Eight chapter of the ROMANS, signifying to the Publisher their earnest desire to have a new edition of them printed; that their use may be more general, this Discourse upon CHRIST's ETERNAL SONSHIP, is given as a specimen of the abilities of the Author.

The following account is given of him, in Dr. CALAMY's History of the Ministers who were silenced and ejected from their Charges, by the Act of Uniformity, 1660.

“ He was born at ~~-----~~, near Melton Mowbray, in Leicestershire, An. 1622. After he had been trained up in Grammar learning at the country schools, he was sent to Magdalen-Hall in Oxon, of which Dr. Wilkinfon, the elder, was then Principal. When he had taken the Degree of Batchelour of Arts, he removed to Cambridge, and was of Emmanuel College. He was for some time Fellow of Trinity, and much esteemed in that flourishing Society. He came to London in 1647. and being received into the family of that excellent, pious, and devout Lady, the Countess Dowager of Exeter, as her Chaplain, he had the opportunity of preaching in the city; and was soon fix'd in Ludgate parish, where his ministry was both acceptable and useful. His Sermons were clear, solid and affectionate; and they were also printed in a fair and lively character in his conversation. He was of a staid mind, and temperate passions, and moderate in counsels. In the managing affairs of concernment, he was not vehement and confident, not imposing and over-bearing, but receptive of advice and yielding to reason. He was full of compassion, charity and beneficence. He was a Nonconformist upon moderate principles, much rather desiring to have been comprehended in the National Church, than to have separated from it. He met with trouble after his ejection, but the Divine Providence secur'd him of a screen, by disposing of him into the family of that Right Honourable and eminently pious Lady, the Countess Dowager of Exeter, daughter to the Earl of Bridgewater.

“ In his last sickness, his pains were very severe, proceeding from a cancerous humour, that spread itself in his joints, and prey'd upon the tenderest membranes, the most sensible parts: But so signal was his patience, that he never spake the least repining word; glorifying GOD in his death as well as in his life, by his resign'd submission to GOD, and admirable patience even to the last. He died at the Countess of Exeter's, March 27, 1687.; leaving behind him an incomparable Library of the most valuable Books, in all parts of learning; which was afterwards sold by auction for thirteen hundred

“ pounds.



“ pounds.—He hath left behind him a Commentary, or Sermons on the
 “ four first verses of the 8th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, 4to.
 “ A Treatise of Holy Dedication, both personal and domestick, written
 “ after the fire of London, and recommended to the Citizens after their
 “ return to their rebuilt habitations.—A Funeral Sermon for Mr. Vines,
 “ with an account of his life and death.—The Life of Mr. William
 “ Whitaker.—A Funeral Sermon for Mr. Matth. Martin.—A Sermon
 “ at Paul’s, Oct. 26. 1656. And another before the Lord Mayor, &c.
 “ at the Spittle, 1657. And Two Sermons in the Volumes of the
 “ MORNING EXERCISE. One in that at St. Giles’s, on the Covenant of
 “ Redemption. Another in the Supplement to the Morning Exercise
 “ at Cripplegate, On Christian Contentedness in every State.”

This Character is very favourable: But upon a perusal of the following Discourse, the Reader will find, it is not too favourable. His works praise him—In these, he has displayed a solid judgement, great acquaintance with the Scriptures, and the Writings of the learned; of which, it appears, he had a great stock.

Now, indeed, his Writings are scarce, and his Name almost forgot.—The Publisher might, if there had been much necessity for it, have got Testimonies, in approbation of the following Discourse, from several Ministers: But such of these, as he had occasion to consult, alledged their names could add no weight to the Writings of such an eminent Divine. Meanwhile, they thought the publication of his *Discourse on the Sonship of Christ*, might be of no small service to the Faith of Christians, against the present alarming progress of Socinianism, and every new-fangled notion * about that Great Mystery of Godliness. And the more hearty were they in advising the publication of it, as there are few Treatises on the Point, in the English Language, where the whole doctrine of the Scriptures, and the blasphemy of Socinians, about CHRIST’S Sonship, are drawn into so narrow a compass, and at the same time illustrated with such plainness, as to be easily understood by ordinary readers.

If this meet with approbation, the Publisher intends to publish a new Edition of the whole of his Discourses upon the four first verses of that 8th Chapter of the Romans, wherein (according to the Title Page, as printed at London, 1672.) The Saints Exemption from Condemnation; The Mystical Union; The Spiritual Life; The Dominion of Sin, and the Spirit’s Agency in Freeing from it: The Law’s inability to Justify and Save; Christ’s Mission, Eternal Sonship, Incarnation; His being an Expiatory Sacrifice, fulfilling the Law-Righteousness; (which is imputed to Believers) are opened, confirmed, vindicated and applied.

In the original copy, there are many phrases, in the learned languages, which, if they had been printed in the proper characters, would have caused an additional expence: The learned know where to find these;

* How monstrous was the opinion lately vented about this, by Dr. D——h of P——s.

these; and the unskilled in these tongues, would have reaped no profit from their being printed; only the most important of them are rendered into English; as also a few of the Author's Marginal Notes, being the Sentiments of some most eminent Divines. To which are added, other occasional Notes.

I have only to add, that I have here given a few of the Sentiments of Dr. JOHN HURRION, because they tend to illustrate and establish these valuable truths, which Dr. JACOMB is discoursing about; and because I am about to issue Proposals for the reprinting by subscription, the Whole Works of that much and justly esteemed Divine; containing his Discourses upon the Knowledge of CHRIST Crucified, and CHRIST Glorified; and his Discourses about the Divine Personality, and Works of the Holy Spirit. The former have been printed in this country; the last have never been so, and can scarcely be got any where. Those who have read the former, prize them greatly; and those who have not read them, will find, in the following Notes, a faint specimen of the solid judgement of the Author: and when they see the whole, they will find a vein of savoury practical Religion, accompanying a deep insight into the Mysteries of the Gospel; all delivered in a perspicuous and plain style: and they will find these carried through the whole, no part being inferior to another.

H. M.

FALKIRK,

- MARCH, 1791.

* * * Dr. JACOMB, in his Preface to the Reader, saith: "Of all the Controversies with which the Church is pestered, I have, as the texts did lead me, most concerned myself in those wherein we have to do with Papists and Socinians; but principally with the latter. These are the great impugnors of the Christian Faith, in their denying Christ's God-head, Eternal Sonship, Pre-existence before his Nativity of the Virgin, (wherein they are worse than the old Arians) Satisfaction, his being a proper Sacrifice for Sin, and the Main ends of his Death, &c. Against whom therefore I have endeavoured to assert and maintain these high and glorious truths. What thoughts others may have of Socinianism, I know not; I know my own. And, might I presume so far, as to give advice to my Reverend Brethren in the Ministry, I would humbly advise them to set themselves to their utmost against it. For it doth not only strike at the whole plat-form of the Gospel; but of all other opinions, it gets nearest the very vitals thereof. This cursed worm grows in the Gospel's best fruit: 'tis for the poisoning of those Fountains from which the streams of life do most immediately flow; whilst many other errors, endanger but the remoter parts, this endangers the very heart of Christianity. Can we say or do too much to secure souls from it, and to defend the Gospel against it? God prevent the growth of it in all the Churches!"

THE
ONE-PROPER SONSHIP
OF
The LORD JESUS CHRIST,
ILLUSTRATED, &c.

ROMANS viii. 3.

—God sending his own Son—

OUR Apostle here, eagle-like, soars aloft and rises up in his discourse, to the most sublime Truths of the Gospel. These two verses * set things before us, so high as may fill heaven and earth with astonishment. Here is, the whole Gospel summed up in a few words; here is, in one view, man undone, and man recovered; the depths of the creature's misery and the heights of God's mercy, in a short abridgement. For here is God's sending his Son, which surely was the greatest thing, that ever he did: Here is this Son sent in our flesh, the first and the great mystery of the Gospel; here is sin condemned and the sinner acquitted; the Law represented as impossible for us to keep, yet fulfilled for us in a most strange and wonderful manner—a way which none could have found but God alone. And what his own Law cannot do, his own Son can.—Here is the very mirror of the wisdom, love and grace of the blessed God, "God

* The Author means Verses 3d and 4th, which, in illustrating, he joins together. The Discourse now published is only the illustration of one of the Doctrinal Observations from these verses; and tho' a distinct and complete Sermon by itself, yet it is thought proper to give a short abstract of his general introduction to these verses; and of his explication of this clause, "God sending," &c. and of his scheme of particulars upon the word SENDING. Hereby the reader will have some view of the whole.

“ God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh.”

In this whole clause you have, 1. The act, or the thing done; namely, the sending of Christ. 2. The Person sending, viz. God the Father: “ God sent,” &c. It is a known rule, when the name or title of God is set in contradistinction to the Son, it is then taken, not essentially, but personally; for the first person, God the Father. 3. You have the Person sent, our Lord Jesus Christ: and he is set forth, (1.) By his near relation to God, ‘ His Son.’ In order to the sinner’s redemption, God did not employ an ordinary person, a mere servant, a creature that stood at a great distance from him; but so great was his love, he employed a Son. (2.) He is set forth by the speciality and peculiarity of this relation, ‘ His own Son.’ In the Greek it is, the “ Son of himself:” and in ver. 32. it is “ His proper Son,” or, his own Son. There is that in this expression, which very much heightens Christ’s Sonship. Here is further, 4. The Explication of this Sending, with respect unto the way and manner of it: How did God send his Son? Why, In the likeness of sinful flesh.

There are three great doctrinal truths here to be handled :

I. That Christ was sent, and sent by God the Father.

II. That Christ, thus sent, was God’s own Son.

III. That Christ, God’s own Son, was sent in the likeness of sinful flesh,

This sending of Christ by the Father, 1. Strongly implies his pre-existence before his incarnation: for if he had not had a Being before, how could the Father send him? That which is not, cannot be sent. 2. It speaks his personality. He did not only exist before he took flesh, but he existed as a Person: if Christ be sent by the Father, and upon that, doth assume flesh, then certainly He was a person; for none but a person could do this. 3. It notes the distinction that is betwixt the Father and Christ; which appears not only as, One is the Father, and the Other is the Son; but also, as the One sends,



sends, and the Other is sent. The Father and the Son are one in nature and essence, with respect to which he saith, "I and my Father are one:" yet they are distinct persons. The same person, considered in the same respects, cannot both send and be sent too: therefore the Father and the Son are distinct persons. True, in some sense Christ might be said to send himself: that is, consider him essentially, so he did what the Father did; so he sent himself. But if you consider him personally, so he did not send, but was sent: upon which He and his Father are distinct *.

The question is, What was the Father's sending of Christ?

To this I answer, 1. Negatively. 2. Affirmatively.

NEGATIVELY, 1. This sending of Christ was not his ineffable and eternal generation, or Sonship grounded upon that. He was sent who was the Son of God; but he

* Dr. OWEN, in his Exercitations upon the Epistle to the Hebrews, speaking of the federal transactions, between the Father and the Son, about our Redemption, Observes, Vol. II. p. 55. The WILL of the Father and the Son concurred in this matter, which was necessary, that the Covenant might be voluntary. The original of the whole is referred to the WILL of the Father—Hence Christ on all occasions solemnly declares, That he came to do the WILL of the Father, &c. The will of the Son also, was distinctly herein. In his divine Nature and WILL, he undertook voluntarily, for the work of his Person, when the human nature should be united therein. For what is spoken of the second Person, is spoken with respect to his purpose to assume our nature.—This the Scripture fully declares—to manifest, that those very acts which he had in command from his Father, were no less the acts of his own WILL: Wherefore as it is said, that the Father loved us and gave his Son to die for us: So also it is said, the Son loved us and gave himself for us. These things proceeded from, and were founded in the WILL of the Son. And, this his voluntary susception of the discharge, of what he was to perform, according to the nature and terms of this Covenant, was the ground of the authoritative mission, sealing, and commanding of the Father towards him.

It is true, (saith the same author, as cited by Dr. HURD, Vol. I. p. 121.) the WILL of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is but one: it is a natural property, and where there is but one Nature, there is but one Will: but in respect of their distinct personal actings, this Will is appropriated to them respectively; so that the Will of the Father, and the Will of the Son, may be considered, in this business, which tho' essentially one and the same, yet in their distinct personality, it is distinctly considered, as the Will of the Father, and the Will of the Son. Notwithstanding the unity of Essence that there is between the Father and the Son, yet is the work distinctly carried on by them; so that the same God judges, and becomes surety; satisfieth, and is satisfied, in these distinct Persons.

he was not the Son of God, as he was sent; nor said to be sent as he was the Son of God. His Sonship was the result of his generation, not of his mission; these two are very different things. He was a Son long before he was sent; and he was not a Son because he was sent, but sent because he was a Son.

2. Christ's sending was not any local motion from the place where he was, to some place where he was not. The Father sent him to this lower world; yet here he was before. The Father sent him from heaven; yet he remained in heaven still, with respect to his Godhead.—

[The Author proceeds to open it affirmatively, in illustrating, That this Sending consists, In God's chusing Him; in God's fitting Him; in God's authorizing Him; in his authoritative willing Him to take man's nature; and in his intrusting Him with great designs.—He next shews, that all this is no argument against Christ's equality with the Father.—Shows his fitness for being sent; His fitness as grounded upon his two Natures; upon his glorious Attributes; upon his Sonship, &c. &c. These things are illustrated at full length: but the foregoing imperfect draught, may give the reader some view of the general scheme. Now followeth the illustration of the Second Doctrine; which is printed fully.]

I proceed to the Third General observed in the words, the description of the Person sent: he is described by his near and special relation to God, as being "God's own Son." From whence the Second Observation will be this, That the Lord Jesus, the Person sent by God, (as you have heard) was his Son, yea his own Son: 1 John iv. 14. "We have seen and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world."

Here Two things are to be spoken to; 1. Christ was God's Son. 2. He was God's own Son.

1. First, Christ was God's Son. He was truly the Son of man; but not only the Son of man, for he was also the Son of God; and he was as truly the latter as the former. In reference to his human nature, he is stiled "The Seed of the Woman, the Seed of Abraham, the Son of David, the Branch of the root of Jesse, the Son of man." In reference to his divine nature, he is stiled "The Son of God." This relative appellation or title, is so frequently applied to Christ, that if I should cite
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the several texts where it occurs, I must transcribe a great part of the New Testament.

Yet it will not be amiss to take notice of the several attestations there upon record to this great truth. As that of John Baptist, John i. 34. "I saw, and bare record, that this is the Son of God." That of Nathanael, John i. 49. "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God." That of Peter, Matth. xvi. 16. "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." That of the Centurion, Mat. xxvii. 54. "Truly this was the Son of God." That of the Eunuch, Acts viii. 37. "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." That of Martha, John xi. 27. "Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world." The devils themselves witnessed to it, Matth. viii. 29. "They cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus thou Son of God? Mark iii. 11. Unclean spirits when they saw him, fell down before him and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God." Christ himself (even when he was speaking to God the Father) often asserted and pleaded his Sonship: And the Father himself, in a most solemn and open manner, attested it; First, at Christ's baptism, Mat. iii. 17. "Lo! a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." And then at his transfiguration, Matth. xvii. 5. "Behold! a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son." The apostle, 1 John v. 7, 8. speaks of the Witnesses of heaven and of earth: "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit and the Water, and the Blood, and these three agree in one." Now what is the thing which they bear witness to? 'Tis Christ's Sonship; for that is instanced in, as to the first and supreme Witness (Verse 9.), "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: For this is the witness of God, which he hath testified of his Son." You see how fully this truth is attested, and how abundantly God was pleased to clear it up in the first promulgation of the
B gospel,

gospel, (it being the great thing necessary to be known and believed). Indeed the Jews (as to the body of them) had a vail before their eyes, so that they could not discern this near relation of Christ to God; they saw the Son of man, but they did not see the Son of God: they went no higher than, "Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren James and Joses, and Simon and Judas? and his sisters, are they not all with us? Mat. xiii. 55, 56. Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then, that he saith, I came down from heaven?" John vi. 42. Nay, when Christ plainly and boldly told them that he was the Son of God, they could not bear it: John x. 33. "For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy, and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God." (You may know what they meant by this, by Christ's reply, Vers. 36. "Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God?") Nay, they were so offended at it, that for this very thing they took away his life: John xix. 7. "The Jews answered him, we have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God." You have a full account of it, Mark xiv. 61, to 65. "Again, the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am, &c. Then the high priest rent his cloaths, and said, What need we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy, what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death." Thus the eyes of that people were then (and O that they were not so still!) so blinded, that they could not perceive Christ to be the Son of God; but the Lord hath given sufficient evidence thereof to all who do not wilfully shut their eyes upon the light. 'Tis a truth out of all question to us who are called Christians; (yet about the Nature and Manner of Christ's Sonship there are some unhappy controversies rais'd amongst us.)

2. Secondly, Christ was God's own Son: So 'tis here emphatically, "God sending his own Son." I have told
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you in the original 'tis "The Son of himself," or his "Proper Son;" (as 'tis Vers. 32.) God is Christ's proper Father, John v. 18. and Christ here is God's proper Son. He is not barely a Son, but a Son in a special and peculiar manner, "God's own Son." This being a truth of very high import, a most fundamental point, I will endeavour first to explain and prove it, and then to vindicate and make good its true and genuine notion against opposers.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is 'God's own Son,' whether you consider him comparatively and relatively (I mean, in reference to other sons); or absolutely as he is in himself, abstractly considered from all other sons.

1. Consider him comparatively: And so he is thus styled, to difference or distinguish him from all other sons. For God hath three sorts of Sons: (1.) Some are so by creation (or in respect of their immediate creation by God), so the angels are the sons of God; of whom divines commonly interpret those passages in Job, chap. i. 6. "There was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord. Chap. xxxviii. 7. When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." So Adam, upon this account, he being immediately made by God, is called the son of God, Luke iii. 38. (2.) Some are the sons of God by grace, viz. the grace of regeneration and adoption: thus believers are the sons of God, as they are spiritually begotten of him, and adopted by him. John i. 12, 13. "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, &c. which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. James i. 18. Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, &c. Gal. iv. 3. To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. Eph. i. 5. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. Rom. viii. 14. As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Gal. iii. 26. Ye are all the children of God,

by faith in Christ Jesus. 1 John v. 1. Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him." Then, (3.) In contradistinction to these, there is God's own Son, or his Son by Nature; one that is a Son of another rank and order than the former: in this respect God hath but one Son, namely Christ. True believers are his sons, (which speaks the exuberancy of divine love towards them; "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!" 1 John iii. 1.) therefore Christ owns them for his brethren, Heb. ii. 11. "Both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one, for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren:" and (vers. 17.) "In all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren." But yet they are not sons as Christ is, his Sonship and theirs are of a very different nature, differing no less than specifically. Upon which account he sometimes appropriates the paternal relation in God unto himself, Luke x. 22. "All things are delivered to me of [my Father, &c.] John xiv. 2. In [my Father's] house are many mansions." And elsewhere he distinguishes 'twixt God as being his Father and as being the Father of believers, John xx. 17. "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." Where he plainly makes a difference; for he doth not say, I ascend to our Father, as though he and they had one and the same common interest in this near relation to God, (as he teaches us to say, "Our Father," because we all stand upon the same foot and bottom of sonship); but he saith, "I ascend to my Father, and your Father:" thereby intimating that there was a difference betwixt God's being a Father to him, and a Father to them. And so indeed there is a vast one, for he is the Father of Christ by nature and by eternal generation; but he is the Father of saints only by grace, by adoption and regeneration, which also are not eternal but accomplished in time. Thus in this comparative notion Christ may be called "God's own Son."

2. Consider him absolutely, and abstractly from all other sons, so he is God's OWN PROPER SON. It will be ask'd, How or wherein?

That I may a little insist upon the explication of this sublime Mystery, I answer, Christ is God's own Son, not only as God hath a special interest or propriety in him, (as believers are said to be Christ's own, John xiii. 1.); nor only as Christ is the Son of no other father, but of God (as the Socinians would turn off the word, 'his own,'); for so the saints themselves may be called God's own sons, they being sons as to their spiritual sonship by and from God the Father only: there must be therefore something higher than this intended in this glorious title of "God's own Son." What may that be? Answ. That Christ was (and is) God's natural and essential Son; that he was in a peculiar manner begotten of him and from him in his eternal generation; that he did participate of the Father's own nature and essence; that he was a Son co-equal, co-essential, co-eternal with God the Father.

To draw all into as narrow a compass as may be: Our Lord Jesus is God's own Son, as God the Father did from all eternity, in an ineffable manner, beget him in his own divine essence: So that it points to two things, To his being eternally begotten; to his being begotten in the divine essence. As to the latter, I chuse to express it so, because 'tis more safe (if not more true) to say that the Son was begotten in that essence, rather than out of it. And some (who endeavour to open these profound mysteries) tell us, that here we are not to consider Christ essentially as he is God, but personally as the divine essence subsists in him as the second Person. In the First consideration, as he was God, he had the divine essence in and of himself; and so he could not be begotten to it; for he was God from himself, (though some, who yet were no Arians, do not agree to this). In the Second notion, as he was God personally considered, or as he was the second Person and the Son, so he was of the Father, and not of himself; for though he was God of himself, yet he was not Son of himself. The usual language of the
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ancients was, ' God of God, very God of very God,' &c. and this was very true; but then you must take it as spoken of God * personally considered, with respect both to the Person begetting, and the Person begotten; for in the sacred Persons Essence doth not beget Essence, but Person begets Person (as 'tis usually express'd). I fear these things may be too high for our weak capacities, that they do but darken rather than illustrate the Sonship of Christ: yet divines know not how to speak more plainly concerning these mysteries. Well, I (for my part) will not venture too far into these great depths: that Christ is the Son of God, yea thus the Son of God (as hath been laid down), is evident enough; but he that will engage in a curious inquisition into all particulars resulting from or referring to Christ's natural and eternal Sonship, will find at last he attempted that which was infinitely too high for him.

Contenting ourselves therefore with this more general explication of it, and not launching out too far into particulars, that we may be the more firmly rooted in the belief of this great Article of the Christian Faith, (viz.) That Christ is the natural and eternally begotten Son of God, (and therefore called his own Son), it will be necessary for us to look into the Word of Truth, to see what foundation we have there for this our belief: For it would be equally dangerous for us to believe it, if the Word doth not affirm it, as not to believe it, if the Word doth affirm it, because we cannot fathom several things in it by the plummet of reason. I shall desire you therefore to weigh the following Scriptures.

John vii. 29. " I know him, for I am [from him], and he hath sent me." They are the words of Christ, uttered with reference to God the Father, concerning whom he saith, that " He was from him." How was Christ from
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* The Son, in respect of his person, is of the Father; but in respect of his Godhead, he is of none. The Son of God, considered as he is a Son, is of the Father, God of very God: But considered as he is God, he is God of himself; because the Godhead of the Son is not begotten, more than the Godhead of the Father. PERKINS on Gal. p. 271. See CHEYN. Trin-unity, p. 134.

the Father? I answer, Not only in respect of his Mission by and from the Father, (that indeed follows immediately upon it, [*'and hath sent me,'*]) but not as the sole or main thing in respect of which Christ is said to be from his Father: I conceive, his being sent is brought in as a quite other thing, and distinct from that): But Christ saith, He was from the Father, in respect of his eternal generation by the Father; that was the thing principally intended by him in this expression. As the Holy Ghost is said to be [from the Father] because of his procession from him, (that's the reason I go upon); John xv. 26. He proceedeth from the Father: So the Son, the second person, is said to be from the Father, because of his generation by him; (and I find the ancients thus opening the place.)

Another text for the proof of this eternal Sonship of Christ, is Psal. ii. 7. "The Lord hath said unto me, thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." To me, this is a very considerable Scripture for the confirming the truth in hand, (though our adversaries, I know, make a contrary use of it; and some others, who are friends, speak somewhat diminutively about it). 'Tis beyond all dispute that Christ was the person here spoken of; 'twas not said to David (further than as he was a type), but to Christ himself, "Thou art my Son," &c. thus some of the Jewish writers themselves do carry it; and the matter of the Psalm with the several expressions in it, are only applicable to Christ; (See Vers. 8, 9, &c. to the end); and as to that Verse which I have to do with, you have it thrice cited in the New Testament, and it is always apply'd to Christ; (so Acts xiii. 33. Heb. i. 5. Heb. v. 5.) Well then, What doth God here say concerning Christ? Why, "Thou art my Son." But, How did Christ come to be his Son? Why, As he had begotten him (for that comes in as the Foundation of the Relation), "Thou art my Son, I have begotten thee." But when did God thus beget him? Why, From all eternity, "[To-day] have I begotten thee." Various are the apprehensions of men about the import and reference

ference of this word [to-day], and what that matter or period of time is to which it refers. Some make it to point to the time of the rage and opposition of enemies against Christ, spoken of vers. 1, &c. Some to the time of the New Testament-administration. Some to the time of Christ's resurrection and advancement, as we shall see hereafter. But I concur with those who do not understand it of this or that particular, determinate day or time; but make it to point to, and to be expressive of eternity. This eternity is but one day, or but one continued Now; in which there being no succession, whatever God doth from eternity, he may be said to do it Now, or to-day. So here, "This day have I begotten thee," that is, from everlasting. True indeed, the word itself (in its first and strictest sense) doth not signifie or import eternity; yet because in this place it must be interpreted according to the matter spoken of, therefore here it must have that signification, the nature of the thing so determining it. For God's begetting of his Son being an immanent act, it must (as all acts of that nature are) be from everlasting: and it being spoken after the manner of men, it must be so understood as may best suit with the nature of God, and with the nature of the thing which it speaks of. When therefore you read ["Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee,"], 'tis as if God had said, "O my Son! I own thee to be so before the world: and I here attest, that from all eternity I have begotten thee; and that thou art my Son by eternal generation." And thus the great lights of the ancient Church, in their contests with the Arians, did make use of and expound it.

That text in Prov. viii. is exceeding full and clear: Vers. 22, 23, 24, &c. "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was: When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, was I brought forth." (This is further, with great
ele-

elegancy set forth, Vers. 26, 27, 28.) He concludes (Vers. 29, 30.), "When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment, when he appointed the foundations of the earth: Then I was by him, as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him." Of whom can all this be understood but of Christ? To whom is it applicable but to him who is the Personal Wisdom of God the Father? And if so, doth it not then plainly hold forth his eternal existence, and also his eternal generation? So Micah v. 2. "Thou Bethleem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be Ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting;" (in the Heb. 'tis, 'From the days of eternity.')

If we look into the New Testament, this will yet be more clear. There Christ is stiled, "The only begotten of the Father:" which title the Evangelist John often repeats. The other Evangelists speak much of Christ's Manhood and of his birth as man, but John is altogether taken up with the Godhead of Christ and with his eternal Generation as the Son of God; (whence Nyssene saith of him, that he did indeed discourse about God; and some think he was from hence call'd John the Divine). In reference to which he calls him, over and over, God's ONLY BEGOTTEN Son, (as you see, John i. 14, 18. John iii. 16, 18. 1 John iv. 9.) Now, How is Christ the only begotten Son of God? Surely it must be in respect of some extraordinary way and manner of his Sonship, peculiar to himself; and what can that be, but that which I am upon? Never was any person so begotten of the Father as he was; God hath other sons begotten of him (as some pre-alleged Scriptures testify), but yet Christ is stiled his ONLY BEGOTTEN Son, because of his special and incommunicable Generation, because he is the Son of God by nature, and hath that very Nature and Essence which God the Father hath. Take away this speciality of his Sonship, and how shall we interpret this exclusive

title of Christ, the Only Begotten of God? He is not only called God's own Son, but also his ONLY Son; and nothing can make him to be so (as will appear by and by), but his being the Natural Son of God, and by eternal Generation. 'Tis observable, after the Evangelist had been speaking of the sonship of believers, John i. 12, 13. immediately he speaks too of the Sonship of Christ (ver. 14.) and he speaks of this as being of a different kind and order from the former, upon which he calls him the "Only Begotten of the Father." The old Arrian heretics had a pretty evasion for this; "Christ (sayes Eunomius, whom Basil and his brother Nyssen have so profoundly confuted,) was the "Only Begotten of the Father," in as much as "he was begotten only of the Father;" (which evasion exactly falls in with that modern gloss which some Socinians give upon the text, Christ was God's own Son, (i. e.) He was the Son of no other but of God). But to this 'tis answered, there's a great difference betwixt being begotten Only of the Father, and being the Only Begotten of the Father; the first makes God to be the Only Begetter, but not Christ to be the Only Begotten: without which this title of his would signifie nothing. For 'tis true as to the saints, they are begotten Only of the Father; but yet 'tis not true that they are the Only Begotten of the Father, (indeed this belongs not to them at all, but only to Christ); their sonship by regeneration, and Christ's Sonship by eternal Generation, are things of a quite different nature and species; and it must be so, or else he could not truly be stiled, "The Only Begotten of the Father."

The Apostle in this Chapter (Vers. 32.) calls Christ God's own Son: 'He that spared not his own Son,' &c. Now the word imports as much as GOD's Proper or Natural Son. That's the signification of it in other references: Luke vi. 44. "Every tree is known by his own fruit." 'Tis his Own Fruit, that fruit which is Proper and Natural to it; so that is to be taken, 1 Cor. xv. 38. "God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." And so Christ is GOD's Own Son, (that is) his Son who hath the same Nature and Essence with himself. There

There are three Properties (if the two first be not one and the same) belonging to Christ in his Sonship, which are incommunicable to any other : As,

1. He is a Son co-equal with his Father: John v. 18.

“ The Jews sought the more to kill him, not only because he had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.” The Jews were in the right, as to the thing; only they erred as to the Person, because they would not see that Christ was this Son of God, and therefore equal to the Father: their argument was good, and their inference proper and genuine; if Christ do claim to be the Proper Son of God, then he must be equal with God: nothing could be more true. And he had and must have such a Sonship as will rise up to this, therefore his whole discourse (in which he is very large, John v. & x. chap.) tends to the proving of nothing lower than his Natural Sonship, and consequently his equality with his Father. And if he had been only the Son of God in a lower way, why did he not so explain himself? Why did he suffer the charge of blasphemy upon it? Nay, why did he lose his life upon it? Had he been the Son of God only as others are, the very telling of that had quieted the people, acquitted him from blasphemy, and saved his life; but he lets them alone to go on in their malice against him, because that was the very truth which they pitched upon, and which he would have to be known, namely, that he was so the Son of God, as to be equal with God. For a further proof of this, take that of the Apostle, where he speaks it out expressly, Phil. ii. 6. “ Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” Surely there is more in this [being equal with God] than what some (particularly Grotius) are pleas’d to make it to be; it notes equality of Nature and Essence, not only some external shew or appearance, or estimation by others. The latter clause must be expounded as ’tis joyn’d with the former, and then its sense and emphasis will be clear enough; Christ “ being in the form of God, (existing in the Divine Nature, and really participating

of that Nature), thought it no robbery (no bold encroachment upon the honour of God) to be equal with God," (to assume and apply that Nature to himself which he had in truth). And (which will much strengthen this exposition of the words,) as that which follows, Vers. 7, 8. speaks Christ's Natural equality with us, (as he was Man) and must be so interpreted; so this here speaks Christ's Natural equality with the Father (as he was God), and must be so interpreted also.

2. Christ is a Son co-essential with the Father. He is not only like him, but of the same Nature and Essence with him, not only under some resemblance of God, but under a perfect identity and oneness of Essence with God, John x. 30. "I and my Father are one." Hence he is stil'd "the Image (the essential and substantial Image) of God," Col. i. 15. Heb. i. 3. This was that great Truth which the Nicene Fathers asserted and maintain'd with such renowned courage and zeal *. (But I will but touch upon this Head, because 'tis the same with the former; that is more comprehensive, but in its main import it perfectly agrees with this).

3. Christ is the co-eternal Son of God the Father. They were both of the same standing (if I may with reverence so express it), both from everlasting. Christ was eternally a Son; there never was any time when he was otherwise, or when he began so to be: Whensoever the Father did exist, the Son existed also (as the Ancients used to express it). If the Father was eternal, and alwayes a Father; then the Son was eternal, and alwayes a Son: for relatives must be simultaneous. This was that which greatly troubled and vexed Arius so often, to hear the Orthodox speaking of "Always the Father, always the Son: &c." I say, this offended him very much, (as appears by what he himself wrote in his Letter to Eusebius): but the thing is never the less true, because he was offended at it. The

* The famous Council at Nicee, in Bithynia, was assembled by Constantine in the year 325. In this Council, after many keen debates, the Doctrine of Arius was condemned; Christ declared Consubstantial, or of the same Essence with the Father—This Council is one of the most famous and interesting events that are presented to us in Ecclesiastical History. MOSHEIM'S Hist. Vol. I. p. 217.

The Scriptures are very plain concerning Christ's Eternity and Eternal Generation, (some of which have been already cited, take a few more,) Rev. i. 8. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, (saith the Lord,) which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." Rev. ii. 8. "These things saith the First and the Last, which was dead and is alive." As soon as the Apostle had spoken of Christ's Sonship, Heb. i. 5. presently he falls upon his Eternity, Vers. 8. "Unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." Thus I have shown in what respects Christ is stiled God's Own Son, and how far those are grounded upon the Word of Truth.

But all this being vehemently deny'd and opposed by some, and it highly concerning us truly to apprehend and firmly to believe a thing of so high a nature, upon these considerations I judge that it will not be enough barely to assert the truth, but it will be necessary also to hear what opposers say against it, and how they endeavour to undermine it; give me leave therefore to spend some time about that.

I think I may confidently and warrantably affirm that amongst all the Articles of Faith which make up the Christian Religion, not any one of them ever met with so much opposition, and was the ground of so many and so fierce disputes, as this great Article which refers to the Godhead of Christ, and to his being the Natural and Essential Son of God. They who know any thing of what hath pass'd in former times in the matters of Religion, know what contests there were about it in the first ages of the Church: In the very infancy of the Gospel Satan stirred up some (as Ebion, Cerinthus, &c.) to oppose it; for it being the great fort and bulwark of Christianity, he would be sure first to make his batteries against it. But things never came to their full height till about 300 years after Christ, when Arius and his party with great zeal (such as it was) set themselves against it, boldly denying Christ to be God, or the eternal Son of God. After a long flux of time, these contro-

versies

verſies were pretty well compos'd, yea the Church had (in a great meaſure) after its ſharp conflicts, gained the belief of this fundamental Truth, and was in the quiet poſſeſſion of it: till in theſe latter ages that unhappy **SOCINUS** came upon the ſtage, and he muddy'd the waters again, reviv'd the old Arrian Hereſies, which ſeem'd to be dead and rotten, and did (with no leſs boldneſs and more ſubtilty) renew the former quarrel *.

With

* It had been good for the Church, if this "damnable hereſy" had died with **SOCINUS**: but, alas! Who have not heard that it has found ſupporters in this preſent time, even among the Doctors of the Church of Scotland,—**Dr. M——l of A——r**, in a late Publication, has attempted to eſtabliſh it.

" Though he calls Chriſt the **SON of GOD**, he never once, in all his **ESSAY**,
" has called him **GOD**. And that we may not miſtake the ſenſe in which he
" calls Chriſt the **SON of GOD**, he deſigns him only, " Our Bleſſed Saviour,
" the **First and Chief** of all the ſons of God," p. 322. And, " For Jeſus pre-
" tending to be the Son of God, was really no more than what he had already
" confeſſed to Pilate, without giving him any offence." What was that?
" " When he avowed himſelf to be the King of the Jews," p. 136. The title
" **SON of GOD**, according to **Dr. M'Gill**, only puts him on a level with crea-
" tures, and imports no more than his Kingly power and authority. It is well
" known, that, like him, Arians and Socinians acknowledge, that Jeſus Chriſt
" is the Son of God, on account of his miraculous Conception and Birth; on
" account of his Reſurrection from the Dead, Exaltation, Power, and Domi-
" nion: But they abſolutely deny that he is the Son of God, as this is expreſ-
" ſive of his Conſubſtantiality and Co-equality with the Father; becauſe they
" conſider him only as an inferior and ſubordinate God.

" We ſhall therefore conſider the Scriptural view of the title, the Son of God,
" when given to Chriſt. By the ſtandard of all revealed truths, it appears, that
" **SON of GOD** is a divine title, that hath only a reference to Chriſt's divine and
" pre-exiſtant Nature, or to his eſſential and eternal relation to the Father in
" the Godhead. This is a title that is only founded in that neceſſary, eternal
" Generation, which is peculiar to him, and is altogether above our conception
" as to the manner of it; but according to which he is, and always was, par-
" taker of the ſame Nature and Perfections with the Father; perſonally diſ-
" tinguiſhed from him, and neceſſarily co-exiſtent with him: And as the
" Son is that divine Perſon of the adorable Three, that was to be the Meſſiah;
" this title is often uſed to repreſent him as ſuch, in teſtimony of his Deity, and
" in diſtinction from the Father and the Spirit. Hence it was exceedingly
" proper, that this title ſhould be ſolemnly declared at his Incarnation, when
" he was to enter perſonally upon the diſcharge of his glorious office, and at
" his reſurrection, when he finiſhed the work which his Father gave him to do
" upon earth; and it was as proper that he ſhould be commonly known, and
" diſtinguiſhed, all along, by this title, as he is ſpoken of as the Chriſt,—becauſe
" his Divinity was eſſential to the diſcharge of his Office, and was maniſeſted
" by it.

" It is evident from the New Teſtament, that the Jews had a notion that
" their Meſſiah ſhould be the Son of God, but in a more ſublime ſenſe than as
" the Chriſt; for Chriſt and the Son of God are not ſynonymous titles, but diſ-

ſerent

With him and his followers (all of which do unanimously agree in their denial of Christ's Sonship in that sense wherein it hath been opened) we now have to do : and the difference 'twixt them and us stands thus ; they agree with us that Christ is the Son of God, but as to the Nature, Quality, Manner, Foundation of his Sonship, there they differ from us. We say he is the Proper, Natural Son of God : they make him (in effect) no better than an Improper, Allusive, Metaphorical Son of God : We say he is the Eternal Son of God ; they say he is only so in time : We say he is the Son of God by Eternal Generation, and thereupon called God's Own Son ; they say he's God's Own Son upon other grounds and causes ; which, what they are, we are now to enquire after, and whether they be true and consonant to the Word. This is a work which hath been done over and over by many (by some in our own language), yet the subject in hand necessarily leads me also to speak something to it.

1. First, they affirm that Christ is God's Own Son in respect of his miraculous Conception and Production in the womb of the Virgin by the Holy Ghost. For the proof of which they alledge, Luke i. 35. " The angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee : [Therefore also that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God]."

Here the Defenders of the Truth take notice of the Adversaries fallacious and fraudulent dealing, which indeed is very gross ; for the greatest of them sometimes seem

"ferent titles, denoting the same Person under different respects. The title "Christ denotes his relation to the people as their Saviour ; and his title Son of God, his peculiar relation to the Father ; and this Nathaniel confesses, " "Thou art Christ, the Son of God," John i. 49."

The SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE OF REDEMPTION by the DEATH of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, Stated and Defended by the Rev. JAMES MOIR, Minister at TARBOLTON, Pag. 10, 11.

The reader also will find this precious Doctrine defended in the ASSOCIATE SYNOD's Warning against SOCINIANISM, P. 52—63.

This also is the Doctrine of the Confession of Faith, compiled by that venerable Assembly of Divines (of whom Dr. JACOMB, our Author, was one) which met at Westminster, &c. See Confes. Chap. 8. sect. 1, 2.

seem to grant that Christ is the Natural and Essential Son of God, ('tis the very Title which they prefix before some of their Treatises); in which one would think that they did concur with us, holding the same thing which we do, and giving the same honour and respect to Christ which we do: when in truth there's no such thing, they do but speak fraudulently (according to the custom of their old predecessors): for here's the fallacy, they mean by all this nothing more than that Christ was the Son of God in regard of his wonderful Conception and Nativity by the Virgin Mary. (But to pass by their frauds, let us come to the thing.) We say, Christ's Filiation or Sonship was grounded upon something of a far higher nature than this, that he was the Son of God antecedently to it, even from all eternity; they ground his Sonship upon it only, making it but then to commence when he was begotten by the Holy Ghost, conceived and born by the Virgin.

Against which dangerous Opinion we argue thus:

1. If Christ's Sonship did result from this, as the true and proper ground of it, then the Holy Ghost (the third Person) should rather be intitled the Father of Christ than the first Person; because that effect which was the foundation of Christ's Sonship was more immediately produced by him than by the first Person. But this is notoriously false, for all along in the whole current of the Word, Christ is brought in as the Son of the Father, and as standing in this relation to the Father, and not to the Spirit.

2. Christ himself never resolves his Sonship into his miraculous Conception or Birth. You find him sometimes professedly treating upon it, and giving the world an account about it; and what doth he then ground it upon? Why, he carry's it up to his doing what the Father did, John v. 19. to his quickning whom he will, even as the Father doth, John v. 21. to his having life in himself, as the Father hath life in himself, John v. 26. to his being One with the Father, John x. 30. to his being in the Father, and his Father in him, John

John x. 38. He doth not at all mention his miraculous Conception (which in all probability he would have done if that had been the proper ground of his Sonship), but he insists altogether upon things tending to the proof of his participating of his Father's Nature and Essence, and by them he designs to make out his Sonship; yea, and that it was such a Sonship as did render him equal with his Father; but this he could not have done either with truth or evidence had he been only the Son of God upon what is here pretended.

3. Though Christ's Conception and temporal Generation was very wonderful, yet that did but reach to his flesh or human nature and there terminate. Now the Scripture doth not place his great Sonship in his Human but in his Divine Nature; therefore as to that it speaks him to be the * Son and Seed of David, or the Son of Man, in contradistinction to his being the Son of God. And his Sonship to God cannot be grounded upon that which was the ground of his Sonship to Man; for where the Sonships are so different, they must needs have different grounds and foundations. Pray let these two texts be well weighed, and they will sufficiently prove what I say; Rom. i. 3, 4. "Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of Holiness, by the resurrection"

* The appellation SON of GOD, did not flow from his Conception or his Birth of the Virgin. The appellation SON of MAN, arose from this: Therefore what the angel affirmed, (Luke i. 35.) is, That notwithstanding of his becoming Man, he should continue to be called the SON of GOD. And the particle [therefore] is designed to shew the agreement between these two appellations, SON of GOD and SON of MAN, as belonging to the ONE CHRIST, by the communication of Properties. CLOPPENB. ANT. SMALC. p. 71.

As Christ's Person includes both Natures, the Properties and Actions of either Nature are ascribed to his Person—It is by a very fallacious way of arguing, that Heretics alledge the Properties of the divine Nature, in denial of his human Nature; and the Properties of his human Nature, in denial of his divine Nature. Seeing the Properties of each Nature belong to his divine Person, as including, since his Incarnation, both Natures: by the help of this distinction—Assertions which would otherwise be contradictory, may very consistently be applied to the SON of GOD, as to be in the Form of GOD, and in the Form of a servant, &c. HURRIER, Vol. I. p. 86, 87.

rection from the dead, Rom. ix. 5. "Whose are the Fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all God blessed for ever." The sum of all, Christ hath two Natures, according to which two Natures he hath two distinct Sonships (he is the Son of God, and he is the Son of Man), these different Sonships must have different causes and grounds, therefore his Conception upon which he was the Son of Man cannot make him also to be the Son of God.

4. As to the text alledg'd by our adversaries to prove their opinion, there's a double answer commonly given to it.

1. The particle [therefore] in it, is not casual but illative. 'Tis not brought in as signifying the ground of Christ's Sonship, but as a note of inference, wherein something is inferr'd from what went before. The angel had told Mary, "That, the Holy Ghost should come upon her, and the power of the Highest should overshadow her; (and then adds) therefore, also, the holy Thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God." [Therefore,] What may be the force of this word in this place? 'Tis a meer deduction drawn from the premises, to this effect: Since such a thing shall be done by the Holy Ghost, therefore (according to what was prophesied) Christ shall be called the Son of God. The words plainly refer to the prophesie, Isa. vii. 14. "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign, Behold! a Virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call his name Immanuel." The Evangelist brings them in expressly in that reference, Matth. i. 21, 22, 23. "And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. (Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold! a Virgin shall be with Child, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel; which being interpreted, is God with us.)" And their sense and tendency is the same here: "Therefore also that holy Thing," &c. As if the angel had said, This being the thing

thing which was foretold, which must be accomplished, and is now near to be accomplished) therefore it shall so be, "That which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God." So that this [Therefore] is only a note of consequence as to the event or fulfilling of the prophesie, not a note of causality as to the thing itself, viz. Christ's Sonship to God.

2. 'Tis, "Therefore he shall be [called] the Son of the most High:" 'Tis not therefore, "He shall be the Son," &c. but, "Therefore he shall be called," &c. And so it points not to that which was constitutive of Christ's Sonship, but only to that which was manifestative and declarative of it. Christ was God before he assumed flesh, but he was "God manifested in the flesh," (1 Tim. iii. 16.) so Christ was the Son of God before he was thus conceived, but this was a great manifestation or declaration that he was the Son of God. 'Tis true, as to us our being called the sons of God, notes our being made the sons of God: but here as to Christ it only notes that he should be declared, evidenced, acknowledged to be the Son of God; he was not now made the Son of God, that was done by his eternal Generation, only it was now made to appear that he was the Son of God. In short, the Lord Jesus, who was thus miraculously conceived, was the very Son of God, but as he was thus conceived, or because he was thus conceived, so he was not the Son of God; for of this there was an antecedent foundation, that which was of a far more ancient date, namely his being begotten of the Father from everlasting.

2. Secondly 'tis said, that Christ was the Son of God in respect of his Sanctification and Mission. John x. 36. "Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said I am the Son of God?" Christ being sanctified by the Father, (that is) the Spirit of Grace and Holiness being in so eminent a degree poured out upon him, and he being designed and set apart and fitted by God to and for a most high and eminent Office, as also he being sent upon a great work for an extraordinary end, to redeem and

save lost sinners; therefore upon these grounds (and not upon his being eternally begotten of the Father) he was God's Son.

ANSW. More is inferr'd from this text than what it will bear; we may thus far very well argue from it, He who was Sanctified and Sent, was undoubtedly the Son of God: but if we go further and infer, He who was Sanctified and Sent, was therefore the Son of God, (as if the Sanctification and Mission were the ground of his being so) * we stretch the words too far, and endeavour to fetch that out of them, which is not at all in them. There's a great difference betwixt the applying of such a relation to such a Person, and the assigning of the proper cause and foundation of that relation: Christ being Sanctified and Sent is the Son of God; upon these that relation may truly be attributed to him: but yet they do not amount to the being the cause of that relation. That Christ who was Sanctified and Sent, is the Son of God, is a Proposition very true; but that Christ as he was Sanctified and Sent is the Son of God, (as pointing to the foundation of his Sonship,) is a Proposition very false; and there lies the Controversie betwixt us and our opponents. The words cited have reference to the preceding Verses, where Christ is vindicating himself from that blasphemy which the Jews charged him with, because he made himself God, vers. 33.: now this he doth first in a lower way, by an argument drawn from the title usual-

* Christ cannot be called the Son of the Living God, on account of his unction or his office, as if the title CHRIST and the title SON of GOD, were of the same import, because they are expressly distinguished by the Lord. For the titles CHRIST and SON of GOD, signify the same Person, but not the same thing in that same Person: For the title SON denotes the Person, but the title CHRIST denotes the office.—As he was of the same nature with his mother, as the Son of Man: so of necessity he must be of the same nature with the Father, as the Son of the Living God. TURRET, Vol. I. p. 329.

We deny that ever it can be proven from that text, John x. 36. that Jesus Christ is called God, or the Son of God, because the Father sent, &c. The Mission wherewith the Father sent the Son into the world did not constitute the Deity of the Son, nor his Sonship; but the Mission was founded upon his being God, and the Son of God.—For the Son could neither have been set apart to the office of Mediator, or sent into the world; unless he had been co-eternal, and co-essential with the Father who sent him. CLOPPENZ. Compend. Socin. p. 38.

usually given to men in places of office and authority; they are called Gods, and if so then, saith Christ, do I blaspheme, because I call myself God and the Son of God, whom God hath Sanctified and Sent, and invested with such high offices? Do not mistake here, Christ is not God only in a titular way, because of his office; he is so truly, properly, in respect of his Nature and Essence; this he speaks to, vers. 30, 37, 38. but he instances only in his Office in this place, and from thence fetches that Argument which was very proper to his present design, viz. the vindicating of himself as to the charge of blasphemy. Verses 34, 35, 36. "Jesus answered them, is it not written in your Law, I said ye are Gods? If he called them Gods, unto whom the Word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken: Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said I am the Son of God?" Now what is there in this to undermine Christ's eternal Sonship? or to make his Sanctification and Mission the ground of his filial relation to God? One word further, As to the latter of these, if Christ was the Son of God before he was sent, then his sending did not make him to become the Son of God; but so he was, for 'tis said here in the text, "God sent his Son;" implying he was a Son before he was sent; had it not been so, it must have been said, "God sent him to be his Son," and not, "God sent his Son;" which supposes him before the Sending to be actually a Son *.

3. Ano-

* Many high titles and characters are given to this glorious Person, to confirm and invigorate our faith and love: I shall just touch upon a few of them. John the evangelist, speaking of the Word made flesh, adds; "We beheld his glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth," John i. 14. He was now in no reputation with men, despised and rejected of them, was far from affecting or enjoying a worldly glory; but yet he had a glory, which his disciples saw, not a fleshly but a spiritual, not an earthly but a heavenly glory. It was the glory of the only begotten of the Father, but not the brightness of his glory as God. For as one well observes, if the people could not bear the glory which appeared in the face of Moses, how should we be able to behold the brightness of the divine glory. Yet the glory which they saw, is expressly said to be the glory of the only begotten of the Father; not the glory of the prophets, angels, or any other mere creature, but the glory of God's only begotten Son.—An uncommon star conducted the wise men to him, they worshipped him, the heavenly host adored and praised him; men, women, and angels

3. Another Cause assigned of Christ's Sonship and of the appellation here given him, "God's own Son," is his

gels proclaimed his birth; an infant in the womb leaped for joy, on that account; but afterwards not the stars and heavens, angels and archangels, but God the Father appeared in glory, and owned him for his Son, 2 Pet. i. 17. The glorious Spirit abode upon him; the gracious words that came out of his mouth, and the god-like works that were done by him proclaimed a glory, which could belong to no other, but the only begotten of the Father. By his miracles, he manifested his glory, diseases were subject to his controul, evil spirits fled at his rebuke, the devil was cast down from his empire, and death itself was conquered by him, John ii. 11. But what made the glory of his grace and truth more conspicuous, was, his dying for sinners, satisfying divine justice, reconciling us to God, enlightening the minds, and renewing the hearts of men: turning vile sinners into glorious saints, a work becoming the glorious and only begotten Son of God. In a word, the wisdom, the power, the grace, and love which appeared in his whole conduct, living and dying, declared him to be a glorious divine Person, God's only begotten Son, full of grace and truth. It is a greater work of power and grace, to cast Satan out of the souls than out of the bodies of men. To forgive great sins, and sanctify the vilest sinners, is a work of grace and truth, becoming the only begotten of the Father.

Christ is the only begotten of the Father, as he is his own proper Son, of the same nature: for, before he was made flesh, he was with God, and was God; not barely like the only begotten Son, but the self-same. The word AS is thus used, when it is said, that Christ was found in fashion as a man, he really was a man; so here his glory was as of the only begotten of the Father; it was the glory of him who really was, and is God's only begotten Son. He is the brightness of the Father's glory; the glory of God shines in the face or person of Jesus Christ; he is the Lord of glory, Heb. i. 3. Many other expressions of a like nature set forth the glory of this divine Person, Jesus Christ. Many glorious titles are affixed to him. Particularly he is said to be the "Image of the invisible God," and the "First-born of every creature." The beginning and first-begotten from the dead. He is the "Image of the invisible God," as the power, wisdom, goodness, and other perfections of God discovered themselves, in the works which he did, so as that he could justly say, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father also:" Because the Father abiding in him did the work; and seeing he did the works of the all-wise, almighty, gracious Father, he by these works proved himself to be the image of the invisible God; and might say, he that had seen him, had seen the Father also. He, being one in nature with the Father, did the same works, and represented the Father's perfections to men. If he be only a creature, how should he be the image of the Creator? A beast is not the image of a man, nor a man of an angel, nor an angel of God; what can be like God that is not God? Who can manifest the glory and perfections of the invisible God, but he who is one with him, or of the same nature and perfections? "He is the first-born of every creature," Colos. i. 15. It is not said, "The first created;" but, "The first-born." Almost all the Greek fathers, and many of the Latins understand it of Christ's divine nature, saith the learned Davenant, who has cited Tertullian, Ambrose, and Chrysostom, full to the purpose. This sense seems to be much favoured by what follows; for "by him all things were created;" which is assigned as a reason, or evidence, of his being the First-born: Because he created all things, visible and invisible, angels, and all things else; therefore he himself is no creature, but the eternal Son of God, who was before them all, by whom, and for whom, they were all made.

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In the eighteenth verse he is said to be "the Beginning:" the word is often used for the principal, the source, spring, and efficient cause: in this sense it may be he is said to be "the beginning of the creation of God," Rev. iii. 14. All things were made by him, visible and invisible, and without him was nothing made that was made. It is observable, that the holy Spirit, when he styles him "the beginning," immediately adds, "First born from the dead;" which cannot be meant, that he was the first person that rose from the dead, for he was not; but rather, that he is "the resurrection and the life," John xi. 25. being God's first-born, his only begotten Son: as he created all things at first, so he quickens whom he will, and raises the dead, and brings them out of their graves, by a word of power; as by the same word of power, he at first brought them out of nothing, into being: This is the work of God, of him who, being the proper Son of God, before all creatures, the Lord and heir of all things, the source and spring of all power and life, made the worlds, and raises the dead. What a glorious Person is our Saviour! What reason had the apostle to desire to know him, and to make him known? And, how justly might it be said to the church, "Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion; for great is the holy One of Israel, in the midst of thee?" Isa. xii. 6.

There is a multitude of other glorious titles given to Christ, which I cannot now so much as mention, which indeed would deserve many discourses. I shall, however, take notice of one more: Christ is often styled "the Son of God," and that with distinction from all other sons of God: He is said to be God's own proper Son; his only begotten Son; his beloved and dear Son; the Son of the living God. God has sons by creation, sons by regeneration; but Christ is a Son in a different and higher sense. Something very great is meant by it; hence a multitude of witnesses attested it. John Baptist bore record of it. Peter in his famous confession said, 'Thou art Christ the Son of the living God,' Mat. xvi. 16. And Christ told him, that the Father revealed it to him, and that he was blessed in having this discovery; that on this Rock the Church should be built. Could it then mean no more than a son born of a virgin, and invested with a special office? Paul calls him, in one place, the Son of Himself, even of God the Father; and his Proper Son, Rom. viii. 3, 32. God, from heaven, proclaimed this title, "This is my beloved Son," Mat. iii. 17. And this is the thing testified by the three Witnesses in heaven, and the three on earth, 1 John v. 7, 8. This is that for which the Jews crucified him; "By our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God," Mark xiv. 61. John xix. 7. When Christ owned himself to be the Son of God, the Jews inferred, that he made himself God. Christ, in his defence, pleaded his Office, as Sanctified and Sent into the world; yet did not deny, but asserted and proved his Deity, from his being in the Father, and doing those works which none but God could do: "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not: but if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works, that ye may know and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him," John x. 37, 38. By which he meant, that he and the Father are one; that he was so the Son of God, as to be true God. The titles of Son of God, and Messiah, are often put together, because they meet in the same Person; not because they denote the same thing, for in Scripture they are distinguished: When the Eunuch said, "I believe that Christ is the Son of God," Acts viii. 37. and when Peter made that glorious confession, "We believe and are sure, that thou art Christ, the Son of the living God," John vi. 67. Did they only say, We believe that Jesus Christ

of Christ's being eternally begotten of the Father, but only of what the Father did when he raised him up from the dead: for so the Apostle brings it in, Acts xiii. 32, 33.

"We declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the Fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again: as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee."

For answer to this, 1. How many Causes and Grounds shall we have of Christ's Sonship? We have had two already, here's a third; we shall have by and by a fourth and a fifth, and I know not how many more,—where shall we stop? Christ's Sonship is but one (I mean as he is the Son of God), and therefore admits not of the multiplication of Causes. In all relations there is some single act which is the foundation of them, upon which in their relative notion they are compleat; and why should it not be so here, in the relation betwixt God and Christ? Our opponents tell us, that Christ upon his miraculous Conception, was the Son of God. I then ask, was he so, truly, fully, perfectly, compleatly? If so (which they by their principles cannot deny), then what need is there of any thing further; or how doth the nature of the thing admit of any thing further? For he that is a Son already perfect and compleat, cannot by any addition or new emergency, be made more a Son; because the essence of things, whether absolute or relative, cannot be intended or remitted. We are enquir-

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is Jesus Christ? And yet so it must be, if by Jesus Christ, and Son of God, they meant the same thing; but if, by Son of God, be meant God the Son, then the sense of their confessions is very full and glorious: We believe that he who is our Saviour by office, is God's own Son by nature; and that, "As the Father hath life in himself, he hath also given to the Son to have life in himself," John v. 26. And if this be meant by the Son of God, no wonder that so much stress is laid upon it, in Scripture. "He that hath not the Son of God, hath not life. Whosoever confesseth that Christ is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. And we know that the Son of God is come, and we are in him—that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life," 1 John v. 12. 1 John iv. 15. 1 John v. 20. The Son of God is the true God; and our eternal life depends upon knowing and believing in him, as such. "These things are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, ye might have life through his name," John xx. 31.

ing what is it which makes Christ the Son of God? We ground it, as we should and must, upon one thing; namely, upon the Father's begetting of Christ from all eternity, and communicating his own Nature and Essence to him: they who oppose, lay it upon several things, as you have already heard in part and will yet further hear in what follows. Now, we say, this cannot be; for there can be but one foundation of one and the same relation, therefore they must pitch upon some such one foundation and wave all the rest. I know what they say; Christ, upon his Conception, &c. was the Son of God, in a way of Inchoation; but upon his Resurrection and Exaltation he was the Son of God in a way of Consummation: I reply, (1.) Then the texts urged before, are out of doors, and signifie little or nothing; for they only prove that Christ, upon his Conception, and Sanctification and Mission, began to be a Son of God; but he was not so indeed, fully, and properly: for there must be yet something more which must follow after to compleat and consummate his Sonship. (2.) This is a very strange and most ungrounded distinction, it arguing a growth and progress in Christ's Sonship, for which there is not the least warrant from the Word of God: We read of Christ's "increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and Man," Luke ii. 52. But we never read of his increasing in his Sonship; that admitted of several manifestative evidences, as to us, but not of several perfective degrees, as to itself. Even the sonship of believers at the first moment of their conversion is entire and full; they may grow and be more perfect in their gifts, graces, comforts; but as to their covenant-state and relation to God, that's compleat at the first, and admits of no further addition. And shall the Sonship of the blessed Son of God be a partial, imperfect, progressive thing? neither the glory of the Person, nor the nature of the relation itself, will bear such a thing.

2. Secondly, nothing more evident than that Christ was the Son of God before his Resurrection: Matth.

iii. 17. "Lo! a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Was not this witness given of Christ before his Resurrection? Rom. viii. 32. "He that spared not his own Son, but gave him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Christ here is called God's Own Son, which must be understood of him before his Resurrection; for the Father's not sparing of him, was antecedent to that, and yet then he was his Own Son, otherwise how could it be said that "God spared not his own Son?" Matth. xvi. 16. "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God:" Was not this confession made by Peter before Christ's Resurrection? I might go much higher in the dating of Christ's Sonship than merely before his Resurrection; but that is high enough to show the falsity of what is asserted by the adversary.

3. We say, Christ was declared and manifested, but not made or constituted, the Son of God, by his Resurrection. So the Apostle himself states it, Rom. i. 4. "Declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of Holiness, by the Resurrection from the dead." That the word in the original is truly rendered by [declared], is sufficiently proved by many. 'Tis one thing to be made God's Son, another thing to be declared God's Son: the first, Christ had from his eternal Generation; 'twas only the second that he had from his Resurrection. You read, Vers. 19. of this Chapter, of the "Manifestation of the sons of God." Believers are not made the sons of God, when they enter upon the glorified estate; but they are then manifested both to be the sons of God, as also what their glory is upon their being so. 1 John iii. 2. "Now are we the sons of God: and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him." Mark it, the relation itself is present, [Now we are the sons of God,] but the dignity and glory which is to follow upon this relation, that doth not yet appear, but hereafter it shall. So here, Christ was the Son of God, long before his Resurrection; but the manifestation there-
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of was when God raised him from the dead: till then his Sonship and glory had been very much vail'd and hid, but then it broke forth like the sun, after it hath been shut up under a dark and thick cloud: then God owned him as his Own Son before all the world, and made it to appear who and what he was. And this is that which the Apostle aimed at in the place cited: his onely design there being to prove that God had given the world sufficient evidence that Christ was his very Son; and, amongst other evidences of it, he instances in the miraculous raising of him out of the grave. So that the Begetting in Psal. ii. and in Acts xiii. are of a quite different nature, the one being proper, as relating to the thing itself; the other improper, as relating only to the declaration or manifestation of the thing: We argue from the proper and primary sense of the words, [Thou art my Son, &c.]: The adverse party, from their improper and secondary sense, as the Apostle makes use of them in that place. In the Scripture dialect, several things are said to be done, when they are declared and manifested to be done: so Paul brings in Christ as Begotten at the day of his Resurrection, because it was then declared that he was the eternally begotten Son of God.

4. 'Tis said, Christ is God's Son, and so called, because of the preheminance and dignity of his Person, or because of his great advancement and exaltation to the Offices of King and Priest. Heb. i. 4, 5. "Being made so much better than the Angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they: For unto which of the Angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son. Heb. v. 5. Christ glorified not himself, to be made an High Priest: but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee." Here you see Christ's Sonship comes in upon his Exaltation, with respect to his Person and Office.

I answer, This proves as little as that which went before ; for here also,

1. 'Tis clear that Christ was the Son of God, before he was thus exalted.

2. His Exaltation was not the ground, but the result and consequent of his Sonship. He was not a Son because he was exalted, but he was exalted because he was a Son. First, the Apostle describes him in what relates to the formality and Essence of his Sonship, Heb. i. 3. " Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his Person : " and then he sets down the honour which the Father put upon him ; not to be a Son, for that he was already ; but because he was a Son ; for that's the ground of the more excellent Name given to him ; and so the words in Vers. 4, 5. come in.

3. 'Tis strange that this day of Christ's begetting should be so multiplied. There's the day of his Nativity ; and then it was, " To-day have I begotten thee." There's the day of his Resurrection ; and then too it was, " To-day have, &c." There's the day of his Exaltation ; and then again it was, " To-day have, &c." Had this text been cited forty times in forty several cases, we must have had so many several Grounds and Causes of Christ's Sonship.

But why then (some may say) is this place so often repeated in the New Testament ?

I answer, Not only because 'tis apply'd to the several declarations of Christ's Sonship, but also to shew that all which the Father did to and for Christ, was all to be resolv'd into his eternal Sonship, as the ground thereof : He was raised again, because he was the Son of God ; Exalted to great honour and dignity, because he was the Son of God ; intrusted to be Mediator, because he was the Son of God ; all was grounded upon this his relation. And therefore whenever such great things are brought in concerning Christ, this text is mentioned, as pointing to that Sonship which was the ground of them ; but not to assert that they were the ground of it.

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4. * Though the glory which the Father hath conferr'd upon Christ, as King, Prophet, and Priest, be very great, yet it will not reach that which is wrapp'd up in his being the Proper and Only-begotten Son of God. Sonship and Office are different things, and the highest Office can never come up to what is in Sonship by eternal Generation.

5. Fifthly, 'tis said, that Christ is the Son of God, in respect of that special love and affection which the Father bears to him. Matth. iii. 17. "Lo! a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." And whereas Christ is called the Only-begotten Son of God, they with whom I have to do, say there's no more in it than only this, that Christ is the most Beloved of God. As Isaac is stiled Abraham's Only son, Gen. xxii. 2. his only-begotten son, Heb. xi. 17. Now, how is this to be taken? Had not Abraham an Ishmael, as well as an Isaac? How is Isaac then called his only-begotten son? Why, only as he had a greater share in his father's love than Ishmael had. For the same reason Solomon calls himself "an only son," Prov. iv. 3. therefore the Septuagint render the word there used, by "the Beloved;" and so our Translators fill it up, "And Only-beloved in the sight of my Mother." So, say they, 'tis here as to Christ's being the only begotten Son of God; God hath a special love for him, and that's all.

ANSW. But we must not suffer this great Title of our Lord Jesus to be thus wrested out of our hands: Without all question God hath transcendent, superlative love for Christ; "His dear Son," he is called, Col. i. 13. but yet we say,

1. As before, This Love is not the Cause of his Sonship, but his Sonship the Cause of it: He is not a Son because belov'd, but he is belov'd because a Son; therefore it cannot be the Cause which is but the Effect.

2. If

* "Christ not the Son of God because of his Kingly Dominion," Vide JACOB. ad Fortum contra OSTOROD. Def. Fid. Orthod. c. 37. p. 512. ad 518. "Not because of his Preheminence," &c. EPIPH. adv. Heres. p. 740.

2. If this was the proper foundation of Christ's Sonship, then there would be only a gradual difference betwixt his Sonship and the sonship of believers. For they being belov'd of the Father as well as he, and even as he is, (for the Nature and Quality of the Love, though not for the Degree of it, John xvii. 23, &c. — "And hast loved them as thou hast loved me,") I say, it being so, if the Love of the Father to Christ was the proper ground of his Sonship, it would then follow, that they are sons just as Christ is, only in a lower degree. But surely the Scripture holds forth more than a gradual difference betwixt his Sonship and theirs: that "more excellent Name," which the Apostle speaks of, Heb. i. 4. carries more in it than barely an higher degree of Sonship; it points even to a different kind and order thereof.

3. As to the instances alledged for that use and signification of the word, which might undermine that which we put upon it, 'tis answered, That Isaac is called the "Only son," and the "Only-begotten" of Abraham, not only because, of all the sons, he had his greatest love, but there were other grounds and reasons of it: He was the only son by Sarah, the only son by promise, and the only heir of the promise; upon which accounts, as well as upon the highest proportion of his father's love to him, he is stiled the "Only-begotten son." The same, under different circumstances, may be said concerning Solomon. But suppose that this was the only thing held forth in the unigeniture of these persons, will it follow that therefore 'tis all in the unigeniture of Christ too, when there is so great a disparity 'twixt Person and person, Sonship and sonship, as hath been already, and might yet further be demonstrated, if it was needful?

4. There is in Scripture another Title given to Christ, to which the Father's greater love towards him than towards others doth more properly belong; namely, his being the First-born, or the First-begotten. Heb. i. 6. "—When he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, &c." Col. i. 5. "The image of the invisible God, the First-born of every creature." And elsewhere,

upon

upon some special and particular considerations, with respect to his Resurrection, he is called "The First-born from the dead." Col. i. 18. "The First-begotten from the dead," Rev. i. 5. But as the title in that reference is applied to Christ, I am not now to meddle with it.

What doth his being the First-born or First-begotten hold forth?

ANSW. Some expound it of his eternal Generation by the Father: some, of the preheminance and dignity of his Person, as also of the immunities and priviledges which belong to him above others. As the First-born under the law had an excellency put upon him from his Primogeniture, to him the dominion and authority over the family did belong, Gen. xxvii. 29. and xlix. 8. as also the double portion in the inheritance, Deut. xxi. 15, 16, 17. and he was the most beloved. In reference to which the people of Israel are stiled God's first-born, Exod. iv. 22. "Israel is my son, even my first-born;" because of that great glory which God put upon that people, and that singular affection which he bore to them. In all these respects Christ is God's First-born; if you understand it of his eternal Generation, so 'tis incommunicable to any other, so he is First-begotten and Only-begotten too; but if you understand it of the excellency of his Person and of the other particulars mentioned, so, in such a degree, 'tis communicable to others. For Israel you see in a subordinate and allusive sense was stiled God's first born; and all believers too may be so stiled in respect of the dignity of their persons and of God's special love towards them. As Christ is the Only-begotten of the Father, that's exclusive to all, as he is the First-begotten of the Father, that signifies prelation, but not exclusion. Saints are excellent, though not so excellent as Christ; beloved, though not so beloved as Christ; heirs, though not such heirs as Christ. And therefore had Christ been called only the First-born, and that too in its second import and significancy, something then might have been inferred from it for the nulling of that Sonship which we plead for, as only
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belonging to him: but besides this, he is also called the Only-begotten; wherefore he must be alone in this relation. And though the saints do in a lower degree share with him in the Father's love, as he is the First-born, yet they do not at all share with him in the glory of his eternal Generation, as he is the Only-begotten.

6. Sixthly we are told that Christ is the Son of God in respect of Adoption: that he is not the Natural or Essential, only the Adopted Son of God.

This our Opposers are not afraid nor ashamed to assert. O how low will they bring the Sonship of our blessed Lord and Saviour! they'll make him any thing rather than grant what indeed he is. But for answer: This is no novel opinion, or that which was never broached in the Church before: 'twas the old heresie of those two Spanish Bishops, Felix and Elipandus, condemned in a Council held at Frankford, very near a thousand years ago: Both Fathers and Schoolmen (all but Durandus) argue much against it.

Take, in brief, these Four Arguments against it.

1. In all the Scriptures Christ is never stiled the Adopted Son of God: Nay, there's nothing there to be found in the least to countenance the attributing of such a Sonship to him; 'tis a meer forgery of man, to evade and put off what the Word expressly asserts. We read much of God's adopting of saints, but nothing at all of his adopting of Christ.

2. Then Christ and believers would have the same sonship, they being sons by adoption as well as he, and he having no higher foundation for his Sonship than they.

3. Christ is the true and proper Son of God; but should he be his Son by Adoption, he would then cease to be his True and Proper Son: for he that is adopted, is only a son in an improper and allusive notion, and but in the esteem and repute of him who doth adopt. Socinus himself so describes such an one: "An adopted son is one who is accounted a son, but in truth and reality he is not so." Then, according to his own explication of it, if Christ be an adopted Son, he is no

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True and Proper Son, but only so as the Father doth so repute him. And is not Christ now greatly beholden to these persons? Is he not highly advanced by them? Do they not shew great respect, and give great honour to him (according to what they pretend), in making of him only a putative Son? Adoption indeed is not so much too high for us but 'tis as much too low for Christ.

4. If begotten, then not adopted; for these two are incompatible or inconsistent: the same son cannot be begotten and adopted too; therefore adoption comes in to supply the want of Generation. Christ must be the one or the other; and if he be the one, he cannot be the other: if begotten, then not adopted; and if adopted, then not begotten. 'Tis true, in the sonship of believers, there is both; they are sons by regeneration and adoption too: but the reason of that is, because they are sons but in an improper and metaphorical respect; I mean in contradistinction to Christ, who is the very True and Natural Son of God.

7. Once more, They say, Christ is God's Own Son, because of his resemblance and likeness to him.

This comes exceeding short; for 'tis not likeness but oneness, not resemblance but equality, upon which Christ is called God's Son: he himself draws it up to that, as you have already heard. No likeness here will suffice but Essential likeness, answerable to that, Gen. v. 3. "Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image." Amongst us you know likeness is not the foundation of sonship; the son is a son not because he is like his father, but because he is begotten by his father; and so 'tis with respect to Christ. There may be resemblance where yet there is no filial relation: in the glorified state we shall be like the angels, yet I never read of any paternal and filial relation 'twixt them and us. In time I fear, according to the old heresie of some, it will come to Christ's being the Son of Man too but in likeness. He is the Son of Man as he hath the very Nature and Essence of man, and why is he not the Son of God also as he hath the very Nature and Essence of God?

Thus I have both laid down the truth and also made it good against Opposers. And now the false Grounds and Notions of Christ's Sonship being removed, the true Ground and Notion of it is the more evident, viz. That he is God's own Son as he partakes of his Essence and was from everlasting begotten by him. He that would read full and large Discourses upon this great Subject, let him peruse the Writings of those * Worthy Instruments whom God hath raised up and enabled to assert and defend it. If any think I have been too long, or have unnecessarily troubled myself and the Reader about it, I must, for several reasons, crave leave to differ from them. We cannot say too much, or too often go over those things, in which the Honour of God's Own Son, our Lord and Master, and the good of souls are so highly concerned. Give the Socinians their due ('tis but a sad commendation) all along they make their thrusts at the very heart of Religion, they fight against neither great or small but only against the great King of all the World, the very Son of God; whom they strike at in his Deity, eternal Sonship, Incarnation, Satisfaction, in what not? Surely we cannot too much endeavour to antidote men against their desperate soul-destroying venom and poyson, especially in times wherein men seem more than ordinarily to incline to close with their pestilent Opinions; upon which Considerations I would encourage myself to hope, that such who are friends to Christ and souls will put a candid interpretation upon what hath been done. Yet as to the Learned, if any such shall cast their eye upon these Papers, I beg their pardon for the repeating of things so well known and common to them, and which they have elsewhere with great advantage. I have only this to say for myself,

* Bisterf. contra Crell, Lib. 1. Sect. 2. cap. 31. Smiglet. de Vero & naturali Dei Filio contra Smalcium. Jacob. ad Partum adv. Ostorod. Def. Fid. Orthod. cap. 9. Arnold. Catech. Racov. Maj. cap. 1. de Person. Idem against Biddle, cap. 7. Calov. Socin. Proflig. De Filio Dei Controv. 4. Hoorneb. Socin. confut. tom. 2. cap. 1. de Christo. Dr. Owen against Biddle, ch. 7. Estwick against Biddle, p. 110, &c. and 375. Cheynal Trin-unity, p. 190, &c. Alting Theol. Elenctica. p. 142. ad 187.

self, my eye hath been upon private Christians, to make things plain to them, and to set that before them here, which, as written in other Languages, they could not reach.

So much for these: But, though I have been too prolix already, I have not yet done. There are some others, of a different party and denomination, who do, in part, concur and symbolize with the forenamed Dissenters. For though they hold that Christ in a more special manner is the Son of God by eternal Generation, yet they also hold that he is the Son of God too in respect of his Conception, Office, Resurrection, and Exaltation. Arminius himself pitches upon the first, as the only ground of the Sonship of Christ, but his successors take in the latter also: so the Remonstrants, so Episcopius, a person of great eminence *. These tell

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* EPISCOPUS rendered himself eminent by employing the eminent talents which God gave him, in the propagation and support of Error. He was taught under Arminius, and became his Successor in the Divinity Chair at Leyden. He made a signal appearance, in support of Arminian Principles, before the famous Synod of Dort, 1618. Where, notwithstanding of his eloquence and subtilty, these Principles were judicially condemned, and Episcopius and his brethren were deposed, &c. Enraged at this, he exerted all his talents to unite the Socinians and Arminians into one Body, that with this collected force, he might crush the Calvinists. With this view he wrote his Theological Institutions, to which Dr. JACOMB here refers: and on that part where he treats of Christ's Sonship, Dr. OWEN makes the following remarks.

" Their good friend Episcopius hath ordered all their Causes of Christ's Sonship under four Heads. 1. The way (saith he) whereby Christ is in the Scripture, by way of eminence, called the Son of God, is in that, as Man, he was conceived of the Holy Ghost, and born of a Virgin. 2. Jesus Christ, by reason of that Duty or Office imposed on him by his Father, that he should be the King of Israel, promised by the Prophets, is called the Son of God. 3. Because he was raised up by the Father to an immortal life, and as it were born again from the womb of the earth, without the help of any mother. 4. Because—He is made complete Heir of his Father's house, and Lord of all his heavenly goods, saints and angels."

But yet, after all this, he asketh another question: " Whether all this being granted, there doth not yet remain a more eminent and peculiar reason, why Christ is called the Son of God? (He answers himself,) There is, namely, His Eternal Generation of the Father: his being God of God from all eternity." So says this great reconciler of the Arminian and Socinian Religions. EPISCOP. Institut. Theol. lib. 4. Cap. 33, &c.

But I desire to ask this learned gentleman, or those of his mind who do survive him, this one question: Seeing that Jesus Christ was from eternity the Son of God, and is called so after his Incarnation: and was, on that account, in his whole Person, the Son of God, by their own confession: What title he or they,

us that God is the Proper Father of Christ, and he the Proper Son of God: But how? Why not only as he was

can find in the Scripture, of a manifold Sonship of Jēsus Christ, in respect of God his Father; or whether it be not a diminution of his glory, to be called the Son of God on any lower account? &c.—That fancy of Episcopius, and the rest of the Socinianizing Arminians, That Christ is called the Son of God, both on account of his eternal Sonship, and also of those other particulars mentioned, may be easily overturned.—For if Christ be the Son of God, partly upon account of his Eternal Generation, (and so he is God's Proper and Natural Son) and partly upon the other accounts mentioned. Then,

1. He is partly God's Natural Son, and partly his Adopted Son; partly his Eternal Son, partly a Temporary Son; partly a Begotten Son, partly a Made Son: of which distinction, in reference to Christ, there is not one iota in the whole book of God.

2. According to these men he is Made the Son of God by that which Manifests him to be the Son of God.—The Scripture never conjoins these Causes of Christ's Sonship, as Causes in, and of the same kind; but expressly makes the One the sole cause Constituting, and the rest, Causes Manifesting only. And if Christ be the Son of Man Only, because he was conceived of the substance of his mother, he is the Son of God Only upon the account of his being begotten of the Substance of his Father, &c.*

By the attempt Episcopius thus made to reconcile the Socinians and Arminians into one, the Scripture Doctrine about Christ's Proper and Eternal Sonship, was opposed in a more dangerous way than even by Socinus himself. For as Episcopius and his friends did profess still to adhere to the precious truth of Christ's Sonship by Eternal Generation; their attempt to establish a secondary and inferior Sonship, was looked upon by the unwary as at least an harmless opinion: This gave occasion to the defenders of the orthodox Faith, when speaking of Christ's Godhead and Sonship, to take particular notice of the assertions and objections of these Socinianizers.

The more moderate among the Arminians, gave up with some of Episcopius' Principles; and in their defences of a secondary, inferior Sonship, mostly confined themselves to the three following Points. 1. The Mediatorial Office. 2. The title First-born, and his being constituted Heir of all. 3. These Scriptures where Christ's inferiority to the Father is spoken of or implied x.

First, They said, "Christ was called the Son of God in respect of his Office as Mediator; and as, by the Mediatorial office, He is inferior to the Father, therefore he must also be his Son in an inferior sense." The general Principles upon which the Orthodox proceeded, in their answers to this, were these and the like: They readily granted, That He who is Mediator, is the Son of God; but they positively refused, that He is the Son of God, because Mediator, as if his Office was the ground of Sonship. They held, That Sonship and Office are very different and distinct things: hence the Scripture carefully distinguisheth between the character of a Servant and that of a Son, Heb. iii. 5, 6. Christ is not a Son because He was a Servant, but He was fit to be such a Servant as He was, because He was such a Son. From this his Eternal and Essential Sonship flows; the greatness of the Father's love, in that He delivered up such a Son to the death for sinners, Rom. viii. 32. The Great Mystery of His Obedience also flows from this, Heb. v. 8. On this also depends the efficacy of His Obedience: For why is it that His Blood cleanseth from all sin? 'Tis not only because 'tis the

* OWEN against BIDDLE, p. 165—178.

x See FELTIUS Harm. of SOCIN. and ARM.

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was eternally begotten by him, but also as he was miraculously conceived by the Virgin Mary, that agreeing to

the Blood of **JESUS CHRIST**, the Anointed Saviour, and so suitable; but also because it is the Blood of **GOD'S SON**, and so sufficient. Again, If the Choice and Appointment of Christ to be Mediator, did constitute Him also a Son, upon a New Ground quite different from Eternal Generation: who in this case was His Father? For the appointment of Him to be Mediator, was the joint work of all the Three Persons; and in the character of Mediator He is equally related to the Divine Spirit as to the Father. For tho' it belonged to the Father (according to the agreed-upon order among these glorious Persons about the Work of Man's Salvation) to inflict the punishment, and to loose the pains of death and exalt the Surety: Yet the Eternal Son, in doing this, was glorifying Himself, satisfying his own Justice, and magnifying his own Law, and laying a perpetual ground for a Reconciliation between Himself and sinners, as really as between these and the Other Persons of the Godhead. If Christ is allowed to be a Mediator at all, it must be allowed that He is the Mediator between the Three-One-God and fallen man. If therefore His appointment to be Mediator be the foundation of Sonship, His Relation as a Son, in this respect, must be equally extensive with his Relation as Mediator: in other words He is, in respect of this supposed Mediatory Sonship, as really the Son of Himself and of the Spirit, as of the Father, the first Person, which every one may see to be absurd.

And what shall we fix upon as the one Proper ground of this Official Sonship? It will not be said, that the ground of it is the Office itself; for mere Office will never be a ground of Sonship in any proper sense: else the Holy Spirit would also be a Son, in virtue of his official work, in glorifying Christ, by taking the things which are His, and shewing these unto sinners, John xvi. 14. Nor will it be said, that 'tis the Divine Nature or Godhead, which is the ground of this Sonship. Where then shall we seek for the true ground of this? Why, perhaps, in His Mediatory Person, as constituted of the two Natures, the Divine and the Human: but to make Him the Son of God on this ground, would make him the Son of God in respect of both Natures; for He is Mediator in respect of both. What then becomes of the important distinction between these appellations Son of God, and Son of Man? And what also becomes of the real distinction between these Relations in which he stands to the Father, "His Father, and his God?" They are not surely the same, else why are they carefully distinguished, as in John xx. 17. Eph. i. 3. The Father is not Christ's Father and His God in the same respect, or upon the same ground. He is His Father in respect of the Divine Nature, and His God in respect of the Human.

In a word, it hath been often observed, that the Opinion which makes the same glorious Person to be the Son of God in a twofold respect, inevitably destroys the Oneness and Immutability of His Person. The common solution the friends of that have given to this objection, has been by having recourse to comparisons from relations among men, as that one may be a son to his own proper Father, and also son in law to his wife's father; and yet continue the same Person. True, the son is one, but are the fathers one too? But what signify all these comparisons from creature-relation, unless they can find an instance of the One Son bearing a twofold Sonship on grounds utterly distinct to the same One Father. Such comparisons are but idle prating, and something worse, about Mysteries our Faith must believe, but which our Reason can never, never fathom *.

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* See ZANCH. De tribus ELOHIM. Bist. Contra Crell. & PELTIUS Harm. &c.

to none but only to him. And therefore in this point, upon their blending of these things together, they are judged by some to Socinianize. Now

A Second ground on which many have endeavoured to build their Doctrine about a Secondary, inferior Sonship, is the title First-born, which is frequently given to Christ in Scripture, and his being made Heir of All. They apprehended that the Name First-born implies a relation to others in respect of Sonship; but as there can be no simularity, either in kind or degree, between the Sonship of Believers by Grace, and the Sonship of Christ by Eternal Generation; therefore they conclude, that the Sonship implied in the Name First-born, must be a Sonship upon a ground entirely different from Eternal Generation, &c. A strange conclusion! If this be true, namely, That the title First-born, as given to Christ, is designed to point Him out as the Son of God by office; then, doubtless, all the Glorious Dignity which that Title carrieth in it, as applied to Him, is founded upon and ariseth from that Sonship. And thus (as an Effect cannot rise higher than its Cause) all the preheminance he hath, as the First-born, above those whom He is not ashamed to call Brethren, is merely Official. His Birth-right would thus differ from theirs in degree only, and not in kind. And if this be true, then also, since Christ is called as He is, Col. i. 15. "The First-born of every creature;" the enemies of His Supreme Godhead may plead, as they have often done, That it only means, That He is dignified a little higher than any of them, yet still He is One of them. But certainly when He is called, "The First-born of every creature," it signifies his essential and absolute dominion over them, as their glorious Creator and rightful Sovereign. And by the same reasoning, His being called, "The First-born among many brethren," also denotes His essential and incomparable excellence above them. In this view the renowned champions of the Reformed Faith have considered it. And to what the Reader hath already in the foregoing pages about this, the words of Dr. OWEN may be added "The Lord Christ is never absolutely called the "First-begotten, or the Firstborn, with respect to either His Eternal Generation, "or to the Conception and Nativity of His Human Nature: It is the Dignity, "and Privilege that attended being the First-born which are designed in "this appellation, &c." *

That text where this Title is mentioned, as pointing out Christ's relation to believers, and his preheminance above them, (Rom. viii. 29.) if duly weighed, contains enough to expose the folly of imagining that Christ is called the First-born in respect of an inferior gifted or made Sonship. The titles Son and First-born, are both mentioned: "Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate, to be conformed to the Image of His Son, that He might be the First-born among many Brethren." None who allow Christ to be the Son of God by Eternal Generation, will refuse that it is as He is the Son of God in that respect; He is here spoken of under the name Son. For what is the Image after which believers are renewed, but that after which man was at first created, namely, That likeness to Him who is the Image of the invisible God; which likeness is begun in Regeneration, and will at length be perfected in Glory, when He will be admired in all them that believe. Now, as the term Son in this Verse must refer to his Sonship by Nature, if we shall explain the term First-born as referring to a Sonship by Office, we put this absurd meaning upon the text, as if it had been said, "The Eternal Father did, in His Grace and Kindness, before all worlds, choose and ordain a company of Mankind lost, to be brought in due time, through the use of appointed means, to a conformity, as perfect as created Nature is capable of, unto the Image of His Eternal Son, who is the brightness of His own Glory: and this He did, that He who is thus His Son by Nature,

might

* See on Heb. i. 6.

Now though this opinion doth come incomparably
short of that which absolutely denys Christ's eternal
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might be made or manifested to be His Son by Office. And tho' by this official Sonship, He is exalted in a manifold degree above these many Bretheren, yet by virtue of the same Sonship, He is placed far inferior to the Father." There is no avoiding this gross abuse of the words, if the application of the Title First-born to Christ, be founded upon an inferior Sonship.

The whole of that false reasoning of Socinus and Episcopius, with all their friends, proceeds upon this great mistake: They make these things the ground of Sonship which are only glorious Manifestations thereof. As a worthy Author observes *. If what was said to and about Christ, as the First-born among many bretheren, be not a signal display of His true Godhead and essential Sonship, there is not a single manifestation of these recorded in the whole Scripture. If we therefore are to take these Promises made to Christ by the Father, such as "I will make Him my First-born, higher than the kings of the earth." And, again, "I will be to Him a Father," &c. as Promises about making Him a Son, the consequence is, a Socinian, in proving Him to be only a MADE God, has nothing further to do than tell us, That His Deity is not essential, necessary and supreme: for why? It is matter of promise, Isa. ix. 6. "His Name shall be called, The Mighty God."

Further, The same doctrine about an inferior Sonship, has been asserted from His being "Made Heir of All." But will any pretend to prove from Scripture or common sense, That His being made an Heir was also the making Him to be a Son? He is not a Son because "He is an Heir, but He is an Heir because He was a Son †." The Father did "dispoſe unto Him a Kingdom, but did He also dispoſe unto Him a Sonship?" He who is the Son of God by Nature, was constituted a King by decree; "yet His Sonship was not a part of that decree, but only the ground and foundation thereof: for unless He had been the Son of God by Eternal Generation, He could not have been our Mediator, nor could he have obtained a Kingdom as such," as Boston observes x. If it be said, that as a Divine Person, or, in other words, as the Son of God by Eternal Generation; He could receive no gift from the Father: what shall we say about his receiving that Body or Human Nature, which He says the Father prepared for Him? Was not the assumption of that Nature, the act of a Divine Person, the act of the Second Person of the Trinity? Yes, "The WORD was made Flesh," John i. 14. How great is this Mystery! and how wonderful the condescension of God's Own Son, who chearfully consented to have His essential, supreme glory, for a little while, wrapt up under a cloud of unequalled abasement! But as this was the result of an Eternal and Joint Decree of the Three-One God, it was also in like manner decreed, that this same glorious Person should have the dispensation of the treasures of Grace, and the execution of all judgement committed to Him, Philip. ii. 8, 9. Accordingly God hath glorified His Son Jesus, Acts iii. 13. The Apostle there is, on the matter, telling the Jews, that they would not allow Him to be God's Son, nay, they crucified Him as a Blasphemer, because He said He was the Son of God, making Himself thereby equal with God. But the Father had often before owned Him as his Son, and now He manifested this his essential greatness in a most remarkable manner in exalting Him far above all heavens, &c. Grotius, that great Helper of the Socinians, asserts, "That Christ is called the Son of God because He was raised to an heavenly Kingdom by the Father." To which Owen makes this
reply,

* OWEN against BIDDLE, p. 177. † TURRETT. Vol. I. p. 319.

x, EXPLICAT. of the CATECH. Vol. I. p. 522.

Generation, provided that the abettors of it, who seem to grant this Generation do state it right; that is, that they

reply, "That the Son of God, as Mediator, was exalted to a Kingdom, and made a Prince and a Saviour, is very true: But that by that Exaltation He was made the Son of God, or was so on that account, is yet to be proved; yea, it is most false." And farther he adds, that to say, "God was His Father because He was made an Heavenly King, is an Hellish figment *." Blind but proud Reason is ever ready to ask, How it is possible for the Father's Equal to be MADE a King, or receive what he had originally of Himself? The answer is easy: The acts of giving and receiving between Divine Persons, are not to be measured by the like acts among creatures. And when once we are able to tell, how it was possible for Godhead to be united to Manhood; how the SAME Person could be the Son of God and the Son of Man; how He, who is the Lord of Angels, could be for a little while lower than these, &c. then we will be able to tell how He who was a Son by Nature, could be constituted a King and Heir by decree. Meanwhile, of this we may be certain, that His being made both Lord and Christ, did not constitute any New Sonship, no more than it did constitute a New Godhead.

The Third Ground mentioned, on which the same Doctrine about an Official Sonship has been asserted, is these passages of Scripture where Christ is represented as inferior to the Father; particularly that text, John xiv. 28. "If ye loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, I go unto the Father: For my Father is greater than I." Few Texts (as Calvin and Beza have both observed) hath been tortured so many ways, to serve the cause of error, as this. Arians, Adoptionarians, Socinians, and all Socinianizers, have severally, one after another, tried to make it speak what they wished to hear: But none of them were able to produce one argument from this or any other part of Scripture, to manifest that it was in respect of His relation as a Son that Christ says, "My Father is greater than I." It is not the sound but the sense of the words of the Holy Ghost, that we are to make the ground and matter of Faith. The last clause of the verse, "For my Father," &c. is manifestly added as a reason why the Disciples ought to have rejoiced at the News of Christ's departure; his going by His Cross to his Crown; and His having the whole ignominy of the Cross wiped away. But if Socinians, who will have it to be a proof that He is an inferior God; or if these Socinianizers, who will have it to be a proof of an inferior Sonship, are in the right: What is the consolation to be got from His departure? If their explication is just, then we must suppose Christ to have spoke thus: "You, my dear Disciples, ought to be glad at the thoughts of my departure from you. For I am far inferior to my Father, in respect not only of my present humbled condition, but also in respect of my Godhead and Sonship." Poor consolation! But all the inferiority of Christ to the Father, here meant; (as a judicious Commentator remarks x) refers to that low state of humiliation and suffering which He was then under: and as his going to the Father included the finishing of that Work which required this low abasement, out of which He was to be wholly delivered in his Resurrection, Ascension, &c. so here was a ground of joy not merely to the then disciples, but which will be a matter of eternal triumph to the countless Myriads of Redeemed Men.

The official inferiority of Christ to the Father, is a Mystery that infinitely surpasseth the comprehension of the most enlarged understanding among creatures: That He was the Servant of the Father, and was made under the Law, &c. are glorious truths. But it is mournful that men have all along been attempting to make

* OWEN against BIDDLE, p. 175, &c.)

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they hold Christ to be begotten in the very Nature and Essence of God, and therein equal to him; of which there

make the astonishing condescension of God's Eternal Son turn out to His disgrace. Because He was pleased to have His supreme Glory, as the Son of God, veiled for a time; therefore many would have him robbed of that Glory altogether. A gracious God, however, hath placed in Scripture a manifold guard about the High Glory of our Redeemer. For instance, these very things which are said to be done by the Father to Christ, and imply his official inferiority to the Father, are said likewise to be done by Christ himself. Was He Sanctified by the Father? He is said also to have Sanctified Himself. Was He made Sin by the Father? He is likewise said to have made himself of no reputation, and He took upon himself the form of a servant. Did the Father raise and exalt Him after his death? He also raised himself, and by his Own Power He ascended: "God is gone up with a shout," &c.

In fine, with regard to that proof of an official Sonship, taken from these passages of Scripture, where the Name Son is connected with what respects Him who is so called in his official capacity: If from this we are to infer an official Sonship, we must also infer an official Godhead. For who will take it upon Him to say, That what cannot be affirmed of Him as the Son of God by Nature, may yet be affirmed of Him as God by Nature.

True, it may be replied, That these things which imply inferiority, are affirmed of Him as God-man. But who is this God-man but that One glorious Person, who is the Son of God and the Son of Man. We have enough in our Bibles to prevent us from such absurdities. The declaration of Christ's Sonship by Eternal Generation, is joined with the revelation of these very things that men will have to be a Proof of an inferior Sonship. The declaration of this is joined with that of his being anointed King over the Church, &c. Psal. ii. It is joined with the declaration of his being sent, John iii. 16. When we are told that it was a Son who was delivered up to death, we are told at the same time, it was God's PROPER SON, Rom. viii. 32, &c. If we are not to view Him as the Son of God by Nature, in every instance of His Mediatory work; in all that was done to Him by the Father, and in all that was performed by Himself as the Surety: The unavoidable consequence is, we are not to view Him as a Divine Person. For He has no Personality but as the essential, eternal Son of the eternal Father.

How happy are They who have been brought to "Kiss the Son," in Whom it hath pleased God to reveal Him: Who have "beheld His Glory:" Who have a true fellowship with Him; and for Whose everlasting joy He will make a visible and glorious appearance at the last and greatest of all days, when He will appear in all the reality of a Glorified Manhood as THE Man and Son of Man, to whom the judgement of quick and dead is committed. When He will appear in the Glory of His Supreme

there is just matter of doubting, as to the Person nam'd: but now, he making the Son in the Deity itself not co-ordinate but subordinate to the first Person. I say, though this opinion, thus stated, be nothing near so bad as the former, yet Divines of another persuasion cannot close with it, or let it pass without some confutation.

The Arguments against it, do very much fall in with those which have been insisted upon already.

1. First, if Christ be the Son of God, as eternally begotten, with respect to his divine Nature, and also the Son of God, as conceived in time, &c. with respect to his Human Nature, then the Scripture doth groundlessly distinguish betwixt his being the Son of God, in reference to the one; and his being the Son of Man, in reference to the other Nature: Why doth it make him to be God's Son, according to the Spirit of holiness (i. e. his divine Nature), and the Son of David, according to the flesh (i. e. his Human Nature), if, with respect to both, he be the Son of God? This is to confound those things which the Scripture makes distinct, and places under several references. Christ's Sonships, as the Son of God, and as the Son of Man, are two very different things, and therefore they cannot have the same foundation. 'Tis true, he who is the Son of Man is also the Son of God, but as he is the Son of Man or in what is proper to him as the Son of Man, so he is not the Son of God. And 'tis true, these two in one Person may convertibly be predicated each of the other: thus, the Son of God is the Son of Man, and the Son of Man is the Son of God; but this is founded not upon the Oneness of the Foundation of the Relation, nor upon the Oneness of the two Na-

preme Godhead as the Eternal Son of God, equal with his Father; before whose Face Heaven and Earth shall flee away, and at whose command the Grave will give up its dead. When he will appear in His High Glory as the God-man, in the Glory of His character as the Prophet, the Priest, the King and Husband of His Church. When He will appear to end all disputes about His Godhead, Sonship, &c. and to wind up the whole Mystery of Grace and Providence, to the Glory of a Three-One God, the Wonder of Angels, the Joy of Saints, and the everlasting confusion and anguish of Hell.

Natures, but upon the communication of Properties and the union of the two Natures in one Person. It comes to this, where the relations are distinct, the grounds of these relations must be distinct; and therefore Christ's Sonship, as the Son of God and as the Son of Man, being distinct, there cannot be one and the same ground of them.

2. If this was so, that Christ was the Son of God conjunctly upon his eternal Generation and also upon his conception and advancement in time, then he would strangely differ in the same Relation. I do not contradict myself in what I said under the former Head; for there I spake of both the Sonships of Christ which differ very much, and must not be confounded, but here I speak only of his single Sonship as he is the Son of God, which is but one, and must not be divided. Observe me, as the difference of the Sonships of Christ, as the Son of God and as the Son of Mary, depends upon the difference of their grounds, eternal Generation being the ground of the one, and temporal Generation being the ground of other; so the Oneness of the same single Sonship of Christ, as the Son of God, depends upon the Oneness of the ground of it, viz. his Generation by the Father: for if you add any other ground to this, then Christ ceases to be One Son, then he is the Son of God partly by nature, and partly by grace, partly begotten and partly made, partly from eternity and partly in time: what a strange Son would Christ be upon these terms!

3. There can be but one true and proper Cause of one and the same sonship; this hath been already proved. Divines are so tender of multiplying this relation of Christ, that several of them, though they grant the distinction of his Natures, and hold his twofold Generation, yet they argue but for One Sonship to belong to him; for, say they, Sonship belonging to the Person, and being founded upon the Person, Christ being but One Person, therefore he can have but One Sonship: so Aquinas argues. I concur with others who attribute a Twofold Sonship to Christ; but then I affirm that each of them

have but that one single Cause or Foundation which is respectively proper to them; 'tis only eternal Generation of the Father which makes Christ to be the Son of God, and 'tis only temporal Generation of the Virgin, which makes him to be the Son of Man.

4. We say, Things opposite in their Nature are opposite in their Cause. If Christ be the Son of Man only because he was conceived of the substance of his mother, then he is the Son of God only upon the account of his being begotten of the substance of his Father, as a worthy Author argues.

5. Whatever is over and above Eternal Generation, is but manifestative and not constitutive of Christ's Sonship. This hath been made out in the several particulars alledg'd, therefore it will be needless to add any thing further upon it.

I have shown wherein and how Christ is the Son of God, his Own Proper Son. I'll but propound one Question, and very briefly answer it; and then I shall have finish'd the Explicatory part. 'Tis this, If Christ be God's Son because in his Ineffable Generation the Divine Essence was communicated to him, why may not the Holy Ghost, the Third Person, also be stiled the Son of God, to whom the same Essence was communicated as well as unto Christ?

I answer, No; for two Reasons:

(1.) Because 'tis the same Essence in both, yet not the same Person. When we speak of the communicating of the Divine Essence from the First to the Second and Third Persons, we must be understood (as was before hinted) to speak this of them as Persons, or as they are personally considered: for that Essence simply and absolutely considered, is not communicated to the Son and Spirit, but only as it subsists in them as such Persons: the Godhead itself they have in and from themselves, but their distinct Personalities, in which the Godhead subsists, are of the Father. It being thus, from hence it follows that according to the distinction of the Persons there must also be a distinct communication of
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the Divine Essence, not that there is one Essence in the Son, and another in the Spirit, for both are God; only that is distinguish'd according to their Personal Consideration and the Personal Properties belonging to them, which notwithstanding their oneness in Nature do always remain. Well then, Christ's Sonship being a Personal thing, proceeding not simply from the Divine Essence, but as it subsists in the second Person, therefore it must be proper and peculiar to him, and not common to the Holy Ghost, he being another Person, and the Divine Nature subsisting in him accordingly, with respect to his Personal Properties.

(2.) Because though the same Divine Essence be communicated to both, yet not in the same way and manner. For though both come from the Father, yet 'tis in divers respects, the Son coming from him by Generation, the Spirit by Procession. And therefore though both are God and both come from God, yet both are not the Sons of God, because 'tis coming from God, in the way of Generation only which entitles to Sonship. Thus Augustine answers it, "Thou askest of me (saith he) if the Son be of the substance of the Father, and the Holy Ghost be of the substance of the Father also, why is one the Son and not the Other? I answer, Whether you comprehend it or not, the Son is of the Father, the Holy Ghost is of the Father, but the Son is Begotten, the Spirit Proceeds." Thus this great Divine did solve this difficulty, stopping here and going no further. If any will be so curious as to enquire further wherein the difference lies betwixt eternal Generation and eternal Procession? I am not ashamed to give them this answer, I cannot tell; 'tis a mystery far above my reach: God hath not revealed it, and there is nothing in Nature which will give us any light about it, therefore it becomes us rather to adore than to be inquisitive. I know the schoolmen, who are privy to all secrets, and have a key to open every difficulty, though it be lock'd up never so close, attempt the opening of it, but they had better have let it alone: here humble ignorance is better than sawcy curi-

curiosity. I think they speak best who say, " We know and believe there is a difference 'twixt Generation and Proceſſion, but what that is and wherein it lies, that is to us incomprehenſible." 'Tis time therefore for me to leave this Point and to come to the Application of the main Truth.

Is Chriſt thus God's own Son? I infer then,

1. That he is God: Not a meer titular or nuncupative God, not a God by Office only, not a made God (a contradiction in the adject), but he is God truly, properly, eſſentially. Which great Truth is moſt ſtrongly aſſerted and proved by various convincing Arguments againſt Jews, Arrians, Socinians, all Oppoſers of it; I muſt not engage in ſo vaſt a Subject, I'll only argue from this Relation wherein Chriſt ſtands to God as he is his Own Son, which indeed by itſelf is ſufficient, if there was nothing more to demonſtrate his Godhead. He who is the true Son of God, and ſuch a Son of God is truly God; but Chriſt is the true Son of God and ſuch a Son of God [his Own Son] therefore he is truly God, &c. The Apoſtle joyns the true Son and the true God together, therefore the Argument is good: 1 John v. 20. " We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an underſtanding that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jeſus Chriſt: this is the true God, and eternal life." I do not ſay that every ſon of God is God, for the ſaints are ſons and yet not God; but I ſay he who is ſuch a Son as God's own, proper, natural, conſubſtantial, coeſſential, Only-begotten Son, he is God; where-ever this Sonſhip is, there's the Deity or the Divine Eſſence: now Chriſt is thus God's Son, therefore he is God. What the Father is as to his Nature, that the Son muſt be alſo; now the firſt Perſon, the Father of Chriſt, is God, whereupon he too who is the Son muſt be God alſo. A Son alwayes participates of his Father's Eſſence, there is betwixt them evermore an identity and oneneſs of Nature; if therefore Chriſt be God's Son, as hath been fully proved, he muſt then needs have that very Nature and Eſſence which
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God the Father hath; infomuch that if the second Person be not really a God, the first Person is but equivocally a Father. Therefore he himself tells us, "I and my Father are one:" John x. 30. where he is speaking of a far higher Oneness than that of Consent or Will only. Christ being both the Natural Son of God, and also his Son by Eternal Generation, that makes the thing unquestionable; for what is that Generation but the Father's communicating of his own Nature and Essence to him? This is that which is done in all Generations, for Generation is always the production of another in the same Nature; like ever begets like, as 'tis said of Adam, "he begat a Son in his own likeness after his image," Gen. v. 3. And must it not be so here in the Father's begetting of Christ? If man begets man, then God begets God; this being taken in that sense which I laid down in my first entrance upon this Subject. I know this will not hold as to all modes and circumstances with respect to which I grant there is a great disparity, but as to the conveyance of the same Nature and Essence, so far it will hold. The Jews therefore, John v. 18. argued very well, If God was Christ's Father, and he God's Son, then he was Equal with God, for such an Equality must naturally and necessarily result from such a Relation. John x. 36. "Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said I am the Son of God?" Why doth he say, "Because I said I am the Son of God?" He should have said, "Because I said, I am God," for that was the blasphemy charged upon him, Vers. 33. "Because that thou being a man makest thyself God:" But the answer is obvious, Christ knew that these were equipollent terms, to be God and to be the Son of God are all one, if Christ be the one he must be the other too. You find Nathaneel breaking forth into this witness concerning him, "Thou art the Son of God," &c. John i. 40. his meaning was, "Thou art God." For that which drew this Confession from him was that which was proper to him as God, namely his Omniscience? See John i. 48. God and the Son of God
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are so much one, that he who speaks Christ to be the Son of God, speaks him to be God also. As soon as the Apostle had set down Christ's Sonship, Heb. i. 5. presently he falls upon those testimonies which relate to his Godhead; Ver. 6, 8, 10, 11, 12. "When he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. Unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever, a Scepter of Righteousness is the Scepter of thy Kingdom: Thou Lord in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands: They shall perish, but thou remainest: and they all shall wax old as doth a garment. And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed, but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." You see how Christ's Sonship is linked with the Godhead; therefore the Argument is good to prove the latter by the former. And indeed as his being the Son of Man doth most evidently evince him to be truly Man, so his being the Son of God doth as evidently evince him to be truly God.

2. Is Christ "God's Own Son?" I infer, surely then he is a very great and glorious Person; such a relation cannot but be the foundation of great glory. Though Christ's Dignity and Preheminence is not the Ground of his Sonship, yet his Sonship is the Ground of his Dignity and Preheminence. He is stiled "a great High Priest," Heb. iv. 14. not only because of the greatness of his Sacerdotal Office, but also because of the greatness of his Person who doth manage that office, he being God's own Son; therefore it follows, "seeing we have a great High Priest, &c. Jesus the Son of God." 'Tis no small honour amongst us to be the son of some great man, O what an honour is it to Christ to be the own and ONLY Son of the great GOD! It puts a marvellous glory and greatness upon the saints that they are the adopted sons of God, upon the Angels that they are the created sons of God; but what is this to Christ's being the Natural, Only-begotten Son of God? Herein and hereby

by he hath obtained a more excellent name than either Angels or Men, Heb. i. 4. "for in all things (or amongst all persons) he must have the preheminance," Col. i. 18. The higher and nearer the relation is to God, the higher and greater is the glory which accrues to a person standing in that relation; now what relation to God can be higher and nearer than this of Christ, as he is his Own Son? therefore his glory must needs be exceeding great; O let not any entertain low thoughts of him who is thus the Son of God. The Lord Jesus is the Father's best Son, for Gifts, Grace, Holiness, &c.; and he's the Father's Greatest Son, for Dignity, Glory and Majesty: I say he's the Father's best Son; how short do all sons come of this Son! We read of One who fear'd he might seem to adopt better sons than those whom he begat; there's no such thing to be imagin'd with respect to God, to be sure his Only-begotten Son shall infinitely exceed all his adopted sons, for God hath anointed him with the oyl of gladness above his fellows, Psal. xlv. 7. And he's the greatest Son too, for God "hath set him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion; and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, Eph. i. 20, 21. True indeed, this Great Son, for a time, emptied himself of his glory, and for our sake submitted to great abasement, Phil. ii. 7. but yet even then in himself he was very high and glorious: he who clothed himself with our raggs; put on our flesh, condescended to lie in the manger, to die upon the cross, he even under all this was the Proper Son of God, and therefore full of glory. And 'tis very notable to consider how in Christ even when he was under his lowest abasement, when this Sun was hid under the thickest cloud, I say, how even then there were some beamings out and breakings forth of his glory suitable to this his relation: he's laid in the manger, but there the Wise men come and worship him, he's tempted by Satan, but then the Angels minister unto him, he's crucified, but then the vail of the Temple was rent, the earth quaked, the rocks were rent, the graves open'd, the Sun stepp'd in and hid itself,

as being ashamed to be seen in its glory when the far brighter Sun was under such an Eclipse ; upon all which, the Centurion might well cry out, " Truly this was the Son of God." But what a Person is Christ now ? when the time of his humiliation is over, and when he appears in all things like himself as the Son of God in his greatest glory !

3. Thirdly, was Christ God's Own Son ? I infer, certainly then the Work of Redemption was a very great work ; for God sent his own Son about it, and therefore surely 'twas no ordinary or common thing. Always the greater the Person is who is employed in the work, the greater is that work ; 'tis thus from the wisdom of a man, much more shall it be thus from the wisdom of a God : Kings do not use to send their sons upon mean and petty services, but only upon such as are high and weighty ; and can it be imagined that ever God would have sent his own Son into the world to redeem sinners, if this had not been a work very high and great in his eye ? Indeed this makes Redemption to be the greatest Work that ever was done by God himself : the making of the World was a great thing, but God never sent his Son about that, that was dispatch'd by a word, he did but speak the word and it was done : Works of Providence are very great, but there's no sending of a Son about them ; but when Redemption-work was to come upon the stage, in order to that, Christ, God's Own Son, must come from heaven, and be incarnate, and do and die, and all was necessary for the accomplishing of that ; O how great a work was this ! So much for the First Use by way of Inference.

2. Secondly, was Christ God's Own Son ? let me from hence urge a few things upon you.

1. Study Christ much in this relation, that you may know him, as the proper, natural, essential Son of God. The knowledge of Christ in whatever notion you consider him, is very precious ; it was so to Paul, who " determined not to know any thing save Jesus Christ, &c. 1 Cor. ii. 2. and who " count all things but loss, for the

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the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus:" Phil. iii. 8. but to know him as he stands in this near relation to God, as God's Own Son, O this is precious knowledge indeed! Now first, you have heard much of him, read much of him, but do you know him, and know him as the Eternal Only-begotten Son of God? This is that Truth upon which all Religion depends, in which you have the very heart and spirit of the Gospel, upon which the whole stress of your happiness is laid, 'tis one of the most fundamental Articles of the Christian Faith; and yet will you be ignorant of it? You all have some general knowledge of it, and you all profess to believe it, 'tis a part of your Creed, but do you distinctly and clearly know, alwayes allowing for the mysteriousness of the object and the dimness of your facultys, how Christ is the Son of God, how his Sonship was brought about, and wherein it lies? that he is God's natural Son begotten by him from all eternity in a most mysterious and admirable manner, do you understand any thing about this? Some tell us, that the knowledge and belief of Christ's Sonship according to the particulars wherein it hath been opened, not necessary to salvation: I'll not engage in this Controversie, wherein some do as much affirm as others deny; but this I say, it being so momentous a Truth in i self, and the Scriptures speaking so much of it and giving so much light about it, 'tis of great Concern to all who live under Gospel-revelation, to endeavour to know as much of it as the height of the thing, and the lowness of their capacities will admit of.

And because I would hope, that there are Some here whose thoughts are taken up about it, and who desire to arrive at a fuller knowledge of it, therefore to such I would commend three things by way of Direction.

1. In all your inquiries and searchings into Christ's Sonship, especially into the Ground and Mode of it, viz. Eternal Generation, be sure you keep within bounds of sobriety. I mean this, take heed that in this deep Mystery* you

* The MYSTERY of MYSTERIES, which corrupt and wanton Reason derides, but prudent Faith admires and adores. Catech. Trinity, p. 190.

you "be not wise above what is written," 1 Cor. iv. 6; that you do not therein consult your own purblind and carnal reason, but Scripture-revelation altogether. Pray study it, but in so doing, do not pry too far into those Secrets which God hath lock'd up from you; content yourselves with what he hath reveal'd in his Word and stay there.

'Tis both sinful and also dangerous for poor shallow Creatures to venture too far into these depths, where if they once lose their bottom, (the written Word) they drown themselves presently; there's no clue but that to guide us in this labyrinth. That Christ is the Son of God is very clear, that he is the Son of God by Eternal Generation is very clear; but will you be inquisitive further to know what this Generation is? what can your Reason (the Scripture being silent about it) say of that? O go not too far there! Human reason consider'd as merely natural, is a very incompetent judge of this divine and sublime Mystery, a Mystery to be adored by Faith, not to be comprehended by Reason. Isa. liii. 8. "Who shall declare his Generation?" I may make use of this Text, though possibly the Generation mention'd in it be not that **which** I am treating of: for I much incline to think that it here notes that numerous issue and seed that Christ should have upon the Preaching of the Gospel, rather than his being eternally begotten by the Father; yet 'tis very well known that several of the Fathers take it in the latter sense, they making this to be the meaning of the words, Who can be able to understand in himself, or to declare to others the hidden, ineffable, incomprehensible Generation of the Son of God? surely none can. Without controverſie this, as well as Christ's Incarnation, is a Great Mystery, 1 Tim. iii. 16. Nicodemus was a knowing man, yet strangely puzzled at the Regeneration of Believers; John iii. 4. "How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mothers womb and be born?" certainly the eternal Generation of God's Own Son is a thing much more absurd and unsearchable. And there are riddles in natural gene-

generation which we cannot resolve; Eccles. xi. 5.
 "As thou kowest not the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child:"
 Now, are we so much at a loss and non-plus there, how much more shall we be at a loss when the far more unconceivable Generation of Christ is before us? O therefore I advise you to be very humble and sober in all your disquisitions about that. There are two things in Reason which you must alwayes oppose and beat down, viz. the curiosity of it, for it loves dearly to be prying into God's Ark, into things which he sees good to lock up from the Creature; and the pride of it, for it loves also to sit upon the bench as Judge of the matters of Faith, to be giving out its decrees and edicts as to believing or not believing: now do not you give way to it in either of these respects, in your most earnest desires after knowledge still keep within the compass of what the Word reveals, and let the Word alone command and order your Faith; and especially in such profound mysteries, as that which I am upon, see that these two things be done by you. When I consider the several nice and curious Questions which some have rais'd and discuss'd about the Generation of the Son of God, I cannot but stand and wonder at the pride and fauciness of the wit of man; and so far I do concur with a Learned Person, in his severe censure upon these men. What is more than the thing itself, The Father's communicating of his own Nature and Essence to Christ, we must humbly submit to be ignorant of; by soaring too high, we shall but scorch and hurt ourselves.

2. In your eying of God the Father's active Generation of Christ take heed of all gross Conceptions about it; so as not in the least to measure it by, or to parallel it with, any Physical or Carnal generation. Our apprehensions must be rightly informed about this, otherwise what absurd and wretched notions shall we run ourselves upon? So far as there is that in common Generations which speaks goodness and perfection, so far you make use of them to help you in your conceiving of the
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Divine Generation of the Son of God : but there being much in them which speaks defect and imperfection, all that you must præscind and cut off and lay aside when you are thinking of that Generation which is the ground of Christ's Sonship. As for instance ; for like to beget like, for one to convey its nature and substance to another, this is good in Physical Generations, and so far they may be improved to shadow out unto us the mystery of God's Eternal Generation : But now there being other respects which carry imperfection in them, these you must be sure to keep out of your thoughts and by no means to conceive by them of that which I am upon. As in our knowledge and conceptions of God by the Creatures, we pick out of them what is good and perfect and lay aside what is evil and imperfect, and so by them we ascend to know and conceive of God ; so we must do in Natural and Physical Generations, with respect to God the Father's supernatural and hyperphysical Generation of Christ.

To shew the difference betwixt these two, let me particularize in a few things without much enlarging upon them. Natural Generation upon the failing of individuals is necessary for the preservation of the species ; in God the Father's begetting of Christ it was quite otherwise : In natural Generation there is multiplication, there though the thing begetting and the thing begotten have the same nature and essence, yet numerically they are not the same ; but in the Father's begetting of Christ, these (as the Learned prove) are perfectly one and the same ; they have not only the same specific, but the same numerical Essence : here, as the Divine Essence was not divided, so neither was it multiplied ; for 'tis as incapable of multiplication as of division : Natural Generation, in the creatures, is a transient act ; that in God, was an immanent act. In Natural Generation, the thing begetting precedes the thing begotten and begets that which is after it in time ; in God the Father's Generation of Christ it was not so, both Father and Son being co-eternal : In Natural Generation

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tion there must be such a time before things arrive at their prolifick vertue; far be it from us to entertain such a thought as to the Father's Generation of Christ. So that you see there is a vast disparity betwixt these two, and therefore you must in your apprehensions reverently distinguish betwixt them, and not in common judge of the one by the other, God forbid that you should so sadly mistake! Though the Father's communicating of the Divine Essence to the Son was a true and proper Generation, so far agreeing with Generations amongst us, yet in other respects it was quite of another nature; and so you are to conceive of it, otherwise you will entertain very gross and unworthy thoughts of God.

3. Join Study and Prayer together. Would you know Christ as the eternal Son of God? especially would you go beyond a literal, speculative, notional knowledge of him as such? so as to know both him and his Sonship practically and savingly? O then be much in prayer! Read and pray, hear and pray, meditate and pray, study and pray: he studies this mystery (and all others) best who studies it most upon his knees. This special and supernatural Sonship of Christ is not savingly to be known without special and supernatural illumination from Christ through the Spirit. 'Tis observable that in Matth. xvi. 16, 17. when Peter had made that good confession, "Thou art Christ the Son of the living God," see what Christ resolved it into; "Blessed art thou Simon Bar-Jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." You know that passage, Matth. xi. 27. "All things are delivered unto me of my Father, and no man knoweth the Son, (or makes others to know him) but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." These two Persons do make known each the other; the Father reveals the Son, and the Son reveals the Father; the Son is a fit Person to reveal the Father, for he's his only begotten Son; and lies in his bosom; therefore he saith, "No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son which is in the
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the bosom of the Father he hath declared him," John i. 18. And the Father is also a fit Person to reveal the Son, for he having begotten him, and having had him with himself from everlasting, he knows him exactly: O therefore go to him by prayer, and beseech him to reveal his Son to you! 'Tis a great thing no know Christ in this relation, so great that there must be an heavenly light, a spiritual understanding given to a man before he can come up to it: mark that of the Apostle, 1 John v. 20. "And hath given us understanding that we may know him that is true," he speaks of the knowing of Christ as the true Son of God; 'tis as if the Apostle had said, if God had not illuminated our understandings and irradiated them with a divine light, we had never known Christ savingly in this notion: He who begat the Son of himself from all eternity, to him it appertains by his Spirit in time savingly to reveal this Son to the creature; and therefore your work lyes with him in prayer to beg of him this revelation of the Son. So much for the first thing.

2. A second branch of the Exhortation shall be this; Is Christ God's Own Son? then do you believe him to be such, and believe on him as such. The first we call dogmatical, the second justifying and saving Faith; the first is assent to the proposition that Christ is God's Own Son, the second is reliance upon the Person who is and as he is God's Own Son. The first is more general and common, for all who bear the name of Christians, (in some sense or other) come up to it; yet notwithstanding there is much worth and excellency in it, though not so much as in the latter; and that is absolutely necessary in order to the second; for how can he believe on Christ as the Son of God who doth not first dogmatically believe him to be the Son and such a Son of God? And this general Faith too, as well as that which is more special, admits of degrees, for though all Christians believe it, yet some are more confirmed, rooted, stablished, in the belief of it than others are. Now therefore this is that which I would press upon you, to labour after a more steady, unshaken, fixed be-

believing of this great Foundation-Truth: I hope you do believe it, but do you believe it in such a degree? doth not your faith sometimes waver about it? is not your assent weak and languid, attended with doubtings and questionings? are you rooted and “stablished in the faith, Col. ii. 7. as of other things, so in special of this great Article of the Christian Religion)? are you come up “unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father and of Christ,” as the Apostle speaks? Col. ii. 2. I could most heartily wish that it was thus with you, and with all who do profess that they believe Christ to be the Son of God, but I fear it is not so. Now, my brethren, that I may the better excite you to labour after a full and firm assent unto it, consider that one special-reason or end why a great part of the New-Testament was written, was this, that you might believe and be confirmed in your belief of this very thing: John xx. 31. “But these are written, that ye might believe, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his Name.” You may observe concerning this Evangelist St. John, as of all the other Evangelists he was most inspired in the revealing of Christ’s divine Sonship, so he was also most inspir’d in the pressing of men to believe it and in the setting out of the weightiness of the belief of it: 1 John ii. 23. “Whosoever denieth the Son the same hath not the Father, but he that acknowledgeth the Son, hath the Father also: 1 John iv. 15. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God: 1 John v. 5. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?” What a mighty stress did this great Apostle lay upon it! O how doth it concern all upon the Considerations laid down by him, to live under a steady belief of Christ’s being the Son of God! Indeed this is the Foundation-Truth; Christ himself is the personal foundation, and this Truth, not exclusively but eminently, is the doctrinal foundation: to both of which that famous and so

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much controverted Text is applicable, Matth. xvi. 18. "I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this Rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it:" upon this Rock! What rock doth Christ mean? Was it Peter personally considered? or was it Peter and his Successors? as some would have it; they mean by these Successors the Popes of Rome, whom I trust I shall never close with in this interpretation so long as 'tis this Rock and not this sand; undoubtedly, let but persons be unbiass'd and not wedded to Parties and Opinions calculated for worldly designs and Interests, nothing is more clear, than that by this Rock we are to understand either the Person of Christ, or that doctrinal proposition which Peter had laid down concerning him, Ver. 16. "Thou art Christ the Son of the living God," after which it immediately follows, "Upon this Rock, I will build my Church," or else we may put them together, and take in both, upon this Person and this Faith, the Church of God is built and therefore stand fast forever: so that according to this Exposition, which is with great strength defended by our Protestant Divines, this Sonship of Christ is the foundation-truth. And therefore no wonder that in all Ages the Zeal of the Church hath been so much engag'd therein; for 'tis very well known that in its drawing up of Creeds and Summaries of Faith, this one Article, viz. Christ's being the Co-essential, Co-eternal, and only Begotten Son of God, hath ever been put in, witness the Nicene, Constantinopolitan, Athanasian Creeds, because this was judg'd a thing most necessary to be believed: And indeed there is not any one branch of the Christian Faith, which the Church hath gain'd more out of the fire, after much trouble and opposition, than this one. Nay, this was that very Truth for the owning and asserting of which, above any other, our blessed Lord lost his life, as you may plainly see by the Evangelical History, John xix. 7, Mark xiv. 6. &c. And I desire that it may yet further be considered, that as God himself began and ended with the witness and declaration of Christ's Sonship,

ship, for as soon as he entered upon his public Ministry, the Father set him out with this witness "This is my beloved Son, &c. Matth. iii. 17. And when he had well nigh finished his work, and was going off the stage, then the Father renew'd his witness again, "This is my beloved Son," &c. Matth. xvii. 5. So the Devil too he began and ended with the Sonship of Christ; for presently after the Father's testimony thereof he took him aside to tempt him, and when he had him alone and began the duel with him, how did he assault him? why, Mat. iv. 3. "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread;" he comes over it again, Ver. 6. "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down," &c: If thou be the Son of God? why did Satan harp so much upon this? what might his design be in laying his temptation thus? I answer, it must be for one or for all of these Reasons; either that he might by the observing of Christ's behaviour in the contest more fully inform himself whether Christ was indeed the Son of God, which was the thing he was deadly afraid of, knowing that such a Person would be the ruine of his kingdom; or that he might see whether he could make Christ to doubt of his Sonship, after and notwithstanding the plain Testimony of his Father; or that he might go as far as ever he could to draw him to the doing of what was evil, and so, if such a thing had been possible, Null this his near Relation to God: surely there was some special cause why Satan pick'd out this and so much insisted upon it. Well, here he began, these were the very first words which this cursed spirit uttered when he dared to assault our Saviour, wherein he plainly struck at his Sonship itself, though cunningly he made his temptations to point to some wicked inferences which he would have drawn from Christ's Relation, rather than directly to the truth of the relation itself. And as he began with this, so he ended with this; for 'twas he (which speaks a prodigious infatuation in him, that he should be so forward in the promoting of that which certainly would end in his ruine) who stirr'd up Pilate, the High Priest, the Body of the Jews against Christ, and they

through his instigation fell upon Christ and took away his life: for what? for this very cause, because he made himself to be (as indeed he was) the Son of God. By all this you see of what great moment and importance this Truth concerning Christ's Sonship is, And, to add yet one thing further, pray look to that grand Seducer and enemy of Christ and of the Christain Faith, I mean Mahomet; of whom we read that he also set himself to his utmost to oppose and decry the Sonship of Christ. He was willing to grant Christ to be a great Prophet, but by no means to be the very Son of God; this particularly and expressly he principled his Followers against in his ridiculous Alcoran, and he gave them in speceial this Command, "To worship one only God, and to honour Christ as the Word of God, but not as the Son of God."

From all these premises I infer, is this such a foundation-Truth, and shall not we firmly assent to it? hath the Church with such zeal contended for it, and shall we yet doubt of it? do Heathens, Jews, Turks, so much oppose it, and shall not we Christians who have and own Scripture-revelation, steadily believe it? hath Christ sealed it with his blood, and yet shall we stagger about it? have we such attestations from God and man, and yet shall there be questionings and reasonings in our Souls against it? 1 John v. 9, 10. "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son."

But Some will say, to what purpose is all this? who questions whether Christ be God's Own Son?

I answer, O that there was not too much need of this advice! many poor Souls think they do fully and firmly believe it, and yet 'tis to be feared they do not; and the truth is, that weakness which is in our Faith of adherence, proceeds in part from that weakness that is in our Faith of assent, much of that dejectedness which
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is upon our spirits under trouble, and of those inward sinkings under the sense of guilt, comes from one of these two Causes, either we do not revive upon our thoughts, or else we do not fixedly believe in our hearts that Christ is God's Son, and his Own Son: And, as to loose and common Professors, if ever Arrianism, old or new, should get upon the throne, (which God forbid!) I fear the belief of Christ's Godhead and Eternal Sonship would soon be laid aside. O therefore I would be very earnest with you to get your faith yet more and more strengthened and confirmed about it.

But though this be very good, yet 'tis not enough: besides the believing of Christ to be the Son of God, there must be believing on Christ as the Son of God. You find in Scripture that saving Faith is described by its special reference to Christ as standing in this relation; so Gal. ii. 20. "The life which I now live in the *Flesh*, I live [by the faith of the Son of God], who loved me, and gave himself for me:" why doth the Apostle thus express it, by Faith of the Son of God? I answer, partly because Christ the Son of God is the Efficient and Author of Faith, Heb. xii. 2. partly because this Son is the great Object of faith, and partly because Faith in its essential act doth very much eye Christ as thus related to the Father, for 'tis a believing or relying upon him as the Son of God. 'Tis very usual in the gospel where it speaks of believing, to mention Christ with it as standing in this relation; 1 John iii. 23. "This is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of [his Son] Jesus Christ: 1 John v. 13. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of [the Son] of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life: and that ye may believe on the name of [the Son] of God. John iii. 16. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, (as the only begotten Son) should not perish, but have everlasting life." O what a Person is God's Own Son for sinners to believe on! what an all-sufficient Saviour, how able to save to the utmost, (Heb. vii. 25.) must he needs be who is God and Man, the Son of God
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and the Son of Man ! And indeed 'tis not enough barely to believe on Christ, but there must be such a believing on him as may in some measure be answerable to this his relation : is he God's Own Son ? at what a rate should we believe ? what a faith should we act upon him ? what great things should we expect for him and from him ? can any thing be too high for our faith when we have the proper, natural Son of God in our eye as its basis and foundation ? Saints should have their faith raised not only upon the encouragement of the Promises, but also upon the consideration of Christ's Person as he is so near and dear to God. I have formerly observed, how our Apostle in the Text rises higher and higher in the setting forth of the Love of God : He says God Sent, there was Love ; he 'Sent his Own Son,' there was more Love ; this own Son he sent in the likeness of sinful flesh, there was yet more Love ; and this he did for this end, that he might "for sin condemn sin in the flesh," &c. there was the very top and zenith of Love. Now as there is a Rise in these things in the setting off the Love of God, so there is also a Rise in them in their several engagements and encouragements to us to believe in Christ, and to believe in him yet more and more firmly and fiducially : he was sent, therefore we must believe ; he was and is God's Own Son, therefore we must the rather and the more strongly believe ; he took our flesh, here's an higher argument for an higher faith ; in that flesh he Condemned sin, performed all that the Law commanded, suffered all that the Law threatened : what a faith doth this call for ? Now, if notwithstanding all this, it shall yet be either no believing or but faint-believing, both will be sad, though in a great disparity, for the faint-believing is unanswerable to what is revealed, and uncomfortable to the Saints, but the no-believing is damnable to the sinner.

3. Thirdly, Is Christ God's own Son ? how then should all honour and adore him ! certainly upon this Sonship the highest, yea, even divine adoration itself is due to him. Is he a Son ? such a Son ? the Son of such

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a Father? the greatness of his Person arising from that high and near relation wherein he stands to God, calls for the highest respect, reverence, veneration which Angels or Men can possibly give unto him. Besides this, 'tis the absolute Will of the Father that all should "honour his Son even as they honour himself;" John v. 23. for he having the same Nature and Essence with the Father, the Father will have him have the same honour which he himself hath: which whosoever denies to him reflects dishonour upon the Father, who will not bear any thing derogatory to the glory of his Son. 'Tis a known story that of the carriage of Amphilochius to the Emperour Theodosius; he had petitioned the Emperour to be severe against the Arrians, to discountenance and suppress them because in their Opinions they did so much disparage the Son of God, but could not prevail: whereupon he made use of this device, coming one day into the presence of the Emperour and of his Son Arcadius (who now ruled joyntly with his Father), he made his humble obeysance to the Emperour himself and shewed him all reverence, but as for his Son he passed him by, shewed him no respect at all, rather dealt derisively with him, stroking him upon his head and saying to him (in a way of contempt) SALVE & TU FILI: The Emperour upon this was much offended, sharply reproves Amphilochius for his affront to his Son, &c. whereupon the good man vindicates his carriage, plainly telling the Emperour he had given reverence enough to his Son. And now the Emperour was more incens'd, commands him with great indignation to be thrust out of his presence, &c. which whilst some was doing, Amphilochius turn'd himself to the Emperour and said thus, "O Emperour! thou being but a man canst not bear the contempt or disparagement of thy Son; how dost thou think the great God can bear that contempt of his Son which the Arrians cast upon him?" The Emperour was much affected at this, begg'd the Bishop's pardon, commended his ingeny, and did that now which he refus'd to do before. The inference is undeniable, if great Men stand so much upon

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on the giving of all honour and due observance to their sons, much more will the Great God stand upon the giving of all due Honour and Reverence to his own and only Son: O therefore let Christ be highly adored and honoured by you! If you ask me, how? I answer, every honouring of him is not sufficient, but it must be such as may suit with his infinite Majesty and Greatness; you must conceive of him as God, as the Natural and Eternal Son of God, and according to that honour which is due to him as such, so you must honour him. The Apostle speaks of some "who, when they knew God, they did not glorify him as God," Rom. i. 21. so some pretend to give some glory to Christ, but they do not glorify him as God: O this is that which you must come up to, to adore and reverence Christ in such a manner as may be suitable to his Nature and Relation, as he is the infinite God and the eternal only begotten Son of God; and what Honour can be high enough for such a Person?

But more particularly, there's a twofold Honour which you must all give to Christ:

1. The Honour of Worship. Heb. i. 6. "When he bringeth in the first-born into the world, he saith, And let all the Angels of God worship him:" God will have his Only-begotten Son to be worshipped (though he be very tender to whom that honour is given). Divines do from hence strongly argue (yet I know some make but little of this Argument) to prove the Godhead of Christ; thus, if religious Worship be God's peculiar, if a God be the sole and adequate object of Divine Worship, if no Creature be to share with him therein, it being "that Glory which he will not give to another, Isa. xlii. 8. and Matth. iv. 10. Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve;" and yet the Father will have Christ to be the Proper Object of divine Worship; hence it follows, that then he is and must be more than mere Man, that he is true and very God. And surely it would be not better than flat Idolatry in us Christians, to give proper and formal religious worship to Christ, was he not truly God as well as truly Man. Therefore

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as to this Franciscus David and Christianus Franken (both Socinians) were in the right against Socinus, if Christ was but mere Man (the common Principle in which they all agreed), then he could not be worshipped with religious Worship without Idolatry; whereupon they would not give any such worship to him. And as this Worship proves Christ's Godhead, so his Godhead is the ground of it; for the adequate, immediate, proper ground of Divine Worship (as attributed to Christ) is his divine Nature, Essence and Sonship: true, he as Man is to be worshipped but not because he is Man; the Humane Nature of Christ is the Object of Worship but 'tis only as 'tis taken into Personal Union with the Divine. As he is Mediator and set in such an office, he is to be worshipped, but this is not the proper and fundamental reason thereof; for though he never had been Mediator yet Worship would have been due to him, (as the Father and Spirit are to be worshipped though the Office of Mediator belongs not to them). Further, the Lord Jesus as he in our Nature hath done such great and excellent things for us is to be worshipped; yet this is only a forcible motive and inducement thereunto, not the proper ground of it: it remains then that the alone reason of Worship given or done to Christ is his being God and the co-equal, co-essential Son of God. And he being so, what an obligation doth this lay upon you to worship him? there's inward worship (consisting in the trust, fear, reverence, adoration of the heart), there's outward worship (consisting in attendance upon and due observance of Gospel-institutions, as Prayer, Hearing the word, &c.) in both of these respects let Christ be worshipped by you, both are due to him as he is God's Own Son. Well may you tender your homage to him in this way when Angels themselves bow before him and worship at his throne.

2. Secondly, There's the Honour of Obedience which you must also give to Christ. This is annexed to the declaration of his Sonship, at the same time in which the Father attested that Christ was his Son he enjoined obe-

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dience and subjection to him; Matth. xvii. 5. "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, (what follows?) hear ye him:" this hearing of Christ is the Creatures obeying of him in all his holy Laws, Commands and Institutions; and so 'tis as if God had said, here's a Person whom I own for my Son in a special and peculiar way, whom therefore I have set as "my King upon my holy Hill of Zion," Psal. ii. 6. into whose hands I have put "all power," Matth. xxviii. 18. upon whose 'shoulders I have laid the Government,' Isa. ix. 7. Therefore I charge you to hear him and to yield all Obedience and Subjection to him. O Sirs! 'tis God himself, and not such a poor worm as I, who requires this of you; it must be Reverence and it must be Obedience too, this high relation of Christ calls for both; and believe it, without this Obedience he that is God's Son will never be your Saviour, for Heb. v. 9. "Being made perfect, he became the author of eternal Salvation unto all them (and to none but them) that obey him." I have spoken much to press believing on this Son upon you, but let me add there must be obeying of him as well as believing on him: Obedience is not so of the very essence of Faith, but that Faith may very well be defin'd without it, yet 'tis an inseparable Adjunct or Consequent or fruit of Faith; and these two do alwayes concur in the Subject, though they be different in themselves, and have a different influence upon justification and salvation. But that which I aim at is this, since Christ is the Son of God, and this is clearly revealed to you, since this Son hath made known to you in the holy Gospel what his will and pleasure is, how he would have you to live, what to do, what to shun; I beseech you now hearken to him, comply with him in all his excellent Commands, give up yourselves in an universal subjection to his blessed Laws, let there be an obediential frame of heart to his whole Will: this is indeed to honour him, and to honour him in such a way as best answers his Sonship to God and his Lordship over you.

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4. Fourthly, Is Christ no lower a Person than God's own Son? what cause have we then "to admire and wonder at the greatness of God's Love in his sending of him!" Here's a glass indeed to transmit and represent unto us the Love of God, O how shall we get our hearts affected with it! what thankfulness in us can bear any proportion to the mercy before us! For God to send, to send a Son, such a Son, in such a manner (as follows in the words), here's the Wonder of Wonders; God never did the like before, and hee'l never do the like again, (and blessed be his name there is no need he should!) 'Twould have been admirable mercy if God would have sent some other person upon this errand to redeem and save undone Sinners; if send he will, why did he not send an Angel (as he once did) with a flaming Sword in his hand to keep off Sinners from the tree of life? Gen. iii. 24. O this did not comport with his gracious designs (though it did too well with the Creatures merit), therefore he would not do it; no, his own Son shall be pitch'd upon, he's the Person whom God will send. And his End in sending this Son was as gracious as the Person whom he sent was glorious: surely here was Love, great Love, great even to the degree of infiniteness! Millions of Angels were nothing to one Son, to one such Son: the nearer the relation was 'twixt God and Christ, the greater was the affection shewn to us; Christ, God's Own Son, his first born, his only begotten Son, the Son of his love, who lay in his bosome, had been his delight from everlasting; for him to be sent to recover and save Man (vile, sinful, wicked, undone man?) the Son to be employ'd for the Servant, the Slave, the Enemy? O astonishing mercy! O admirable goodness and condescension! How may we here cry out, "Lord! what is man that thou art (thus) mindful of him? and the son of man that thou makest (this) account of him?" Psal. viii. 4. Psal. cxiv. 3. Here was God's so loving of the world, so as can never be express'd; "he so loved the world as that he gave his only begotten Son," &c. So loved the world! what is there in this So? why so in-

expressibly, so unconceivably. John iv. 9, 10. "In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his Only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him: Herein is Love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." God own'd it as a great discovery of Abraham's Love to him, when upon his command he was willing to offer up his only begotten Son; but alas! how infinitely short did that come of his own Love in his sending and parting with his only begotten Son for the good of sinners? here he intended to give out the highest manifestation of his Grace, and he hath done it to purpose. The Heavens and the Earth were once called upon to be filled with astonishment because of the ingratitude of a sinful people, Isa. i. 2. May not now Heaven and Earth, Angels and Men, all Creatures whatsoever, be called upon to be filled with astonishment because of the stupendous Love of God? O Christians! what influence hath this upon your dull and sluggish hearts? what are you made of that you are no more (in the sense of it) drawn out in the blessing, loving, admiring of God? Pray, (if there be any holy ingenuity in you) take some pains with yourselves that you may be much more affected with it, and give not over till you have such thoughts and affections (upon God's sending his own Son) raised in you, as may in some measure answer to those thoughts and affections which you shall have about it when you shall be in Heaven.

So much for Exhortation, the third and last Use shall be for comfort: and surely here is ground of strong Consolation to Believers, that which may highly conduce to the furthering of their joy and the strengthening of their Faith. You who are such, study this Sonship of Christ, dwell upon it often in your most serious thoughts, make the best of it, and then tell me whether you do not find that solid Support and Comfort from it which you desire and need.

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1. As Christ is the Son of God, so are you. When I say, So are you, you must understand me of the Verity, not of the Kind or Manner of the Sonship; you are not Sons as Christ is (viz.) by eternal Generation, yet Sons you are in another way (viz.) by regeneration and adoption; and though herein you come short of Christ (you being but adopted sons, and he the natural Son,) yet as you are but such, there is greater glory put upon you than if you were descended from or adopted by the greatest Monarch of the World. May not this be matter of great comfort to you, to consider that whatever Christ is, that you are, (according to your capacity and necessary subordination to him,) that all Grace which fell upon him, falls upon you likewise? and yet so it is! Is he the anointed of God? so are you; is he a Son? so are you; is he the beloved of God? so are you; is he the Heir of God? so are you; in these respects also 'tis "Grace for Grace," John i. 16. I am upon your Sonship in conformity to Christ's Sonship, the truth of which you have no reason to question since the procuring of this for you was one thing that God in special aimed at in the sending of his Great Son into the world: Gal. iv. 4, 5. "When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, &c. that we might receive the adoption of sons;" and therefore in this relation Christ takes you in with himself, John xx. 17. "Go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father; and to my God and your God."

2. You may now upon this confidently expect the bestowing of all good. For Christ being God's own Son, and he having given him to you, what can come after that, can be too great or too good for him to give to you? What will God now deny after the gift of such a Son? "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Saints let this be thought of, as all blessings come to you from God, as he is the God and Father of Christ,

Christ, for 'tis "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ," Eph. i. 3. So all blessings are assur'd to you from this relative consideration of God, viz. as he is first the God and Father of Christ, and then in him your God and Father too.

3. You may be sure that there is an infinite value, worth, and efficacy in Christ's Obedience, and that he was a person able to accomplish your Redemption. Christ being such a Son this speaks him to be a Person of great dignity, that dignity of his Person gives the highest assurance to Faith both that he was every way able to go through what he undertook, and also that there must be an infinite Virtue and Merit in whatever he did or suffered: What can be so hard as that the power of the Son of God cannot effect it? and what can be so high as that the Obedience of the Son of God cannot merit it? Had Christ been only the Son of Man, then indeed Faith could not have bore up with such confidence; but he being the Son of God also, and having the Nature, Essence, Attributes of God, how may Faith triumph as to the efficacy and meritoriousness of his obedience! 'Twas the blood of God which he shed, Acts xx. 28. O what a greatness and infiniteness of Merit must needs result from the greatness and infiniteness of such a Person! Heb. ix. 13, 14. "If the blood of Bulls, and of Goats, and the ashes of an Heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the Flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your Conscience from dead works to serve the Living God?"

4. You may go boldly to the throne of Grace upon all occasions. For you have God's own Son to lead you thither and to make way for you, and not only so, but this Own Son improves all his interest in and with the Father for your good; why are you afraid to go to God? Heb. iv. 14, 16. Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus [the Son of God, &c.] let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of

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of Grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

5. You need not in the least question the prevalency of Christ's intercession: Doth Christ intercede and shall he not prevail? will not the Father hear such a Son? Suppose he may deny you (which he will not) yet surely he will not deny his own and only Son. Christ upon this relation may ask any thing and he shall have it; mark the connection Psal. ii. 7. "I will declare the decree, the Lord hath said unto me, thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee:" what follows now upon this? Why, verse 8. "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the Heathen for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." God thinks nothing too much for this Son when he asks it of him; and 'tis the same when he asks for you as when he asks for himself: therefore fear not but that your Prayers shall be graciously answered, Christ himself interceding for you; when the Kings own Son carries the Petition doubtless it shall be granted.

6. This is the Person to whom you are mystically united; and therefore his Glory and Greatness reflects a Glory and Greatness upon you. You are in Christ not only as he is the Son of Man but as he is the Son of God also, for the Union is terminated not in this or that Nature but in the whole Person: the Apostle therefore takes special notice of this, 1 John v. 20. "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, [even in his Son Jesus Christ];" O to be in this Son, there's the glory and safety of a believer!

I have done with this high and most Evangelical Truth, The Lord Jesus is God's own Son: upon which I have been somewhat large, partly because of the excellency of the Argument itself, and partly because of the great opposition made against it. 2 John 3. "Grace be with you, mercy, and peace from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ [the Son of the Father], in truth and love."

T H E E N D.

☞ The intelligent Reader will readily observe, that the Orthography and Punctuation of the first Edition, hath been followed in this also.—Some small errors escaped notice in due time. As,

Page 4. line 6. for Dr. read Mr. HURRION. The Note under p. 29.—32. is from HURRION, Vol. I. p. 87.—92. The worthy Author referred to, p. 52. is Dr. OWEN, whose words are given in the Note. P. 43, &c.

Any other escapes, while they do not mar the Sense, the Reader will Excuse.



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